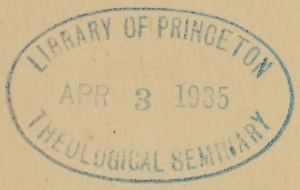
By John Timothy Stone

Christianity in Action



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CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

BOOKS BY

John Timothy Stone

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

EVERYDAY RELIGION

APR 3 1935

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

By

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W. A. WILDE COMPANY
PUBLISHERS BOSTON

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Christianity in Action

MADE IN THE
UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA

Foreword

THE kind reception of the little volume, "Every-day Religion," and the repeated request of many friends whom the book apparently pleased prompts me to continue its spirit in this its successor.

The ordinary incidents of life teem with meaning and suggestion if our eyes are open, and our hearts alert. The grandeur of a mountain view, or the delicate beauty of the wild-flower that blossoms at our feet may awaken response in the soul of the traveler if imagination and ideal are given free play.

The busy life of today may become wearied and worn-out if one knows not the diversion and suggestion of relative truth. The world about us is as filled with beauty and inspiration as the air-waves are with sound, but it requires the receptivity of the aerial to transmit. In some such way these little sketches from life and nature may permit others to "listen in" if there be the inclination. The Spiritual nature is God-given as much as the physical or mental, but is often unrecognized or perhaps unheard by those who have not taken time to heed, or whose interests have been controlled

by material demands or desires. At odd moments during a period of years I have dotted down or written brief sketches from life which have brightened the way for me. Most of them have been published and are now added in this simple form to those which have gone before.

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Christianity in Action

THE MAN WITH THE ROSE

HE was to meet me at the southern station from which we were to drive by automobile to my speaking engagement. My direction read: "Look for the man with the rose." After all it was only a matter of identity, but it awakened thought. He might have said, "I will have you paged when the train comes in," or "wait at the gate or ticket office," but no, "look for the man with the rose."

There was a touch of sentiment and kindness in the direction! There was the delicacy of welcome caught between the lines. A man with a rose was waiting for me. Austerity, indifference, formalism, were destroyed by the very choice of the flower as a symbol. He lived in the land of roses. A rose was the most natural and simplest sign of greeting.

What difference if we had not met before? What need of other introduction? The rose introduced, the smile and handclasp would quickly follow. Little did I care whether my soon-to-be friend was dark or light, old or young, rich or poor, stout or thin, rounded or wrinkled; all I knew was that he wore a rose, and that rose was the signal of welcome and good cheer.

That rose signified not only that I was expected

and wanted but that all arrangements had been made for my entertainment and comfort. Not a thought, plan nor anxiety need take a moment of time! "The man with the rose" had everything in readiness. Perhaps my coming host would be of the rough, outspoken type, but what of it? A man who would wear a rose for recognition had a heart back of any exterior he might possess! The thorns on that rose could not rob it of sweetness, delicacy, fragrance and color.

I had no knowledge of what kind of clothes he would wear; nor had he of what I would wear! It did not matter! All I was to look for was a rose.

I find my mind running on through the happy suggestion of my letter of instruction.

Why not wear roses for signs and symbols more often than we do? Why not suggest the things that are lovely? That was Paul's idea when he wrote to the Philippians "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any virtue and praise, *think* on these things." In other words, "look for the man with the rose."

Years ago a friend who was a great wit caused much merriment by his quick reply. He was greeted by a rather untidy club-mate, whose coat and vest gave evidence of previous breakfast-foods. The latter wore a carnation in his button-hole. "Where do you think it came from?" was his question. My friend replied at once with a smile, "It looks to me as if it grew there."

The rebuke was warranted and was heartily received although its humor fell dead upon the ear of the unkempt. But after all the setting could not rob the flower of its fragrance and beauty. Let *us* look oftener for "the man with the rose," and use the rose more frequently to lead others to us, and help them on their way.

LOOKING OR SEEING

THOREAU, when twenty years old, wrote in his incomparable diary, "The world is never the less beautiful though viewed through a chink or knot-hole." The eye that hath an eye to see is just as worth-while as "the ear that hath an ear to hear" of which the seer of Revelation wrote. That seeing eye, according to the youthful Thoreau, may view his world from "a chink or knot-hole," but it will be a beautiful world just the same. In other words, the soul *sees,* or the eye merely *looks.*

The same landscape may be a forlorn, weary wasteland by the sea, with ugly rocks and hissing, cruel spray, and screeching gulls, and a worn-out dory, with smelling old lobster-pots nearby, and all amid the threatening storm-clouds of a dying day; or it may be a quaint fisherman's hut on a rock-coved, sheltered shore, where the fisherman moors his trusty boat, which the gentle tide lifts on the shifting sands, where the gulls come and children love to play. The man who sees the first

looks out on the scene from his clouded, visionless soul, the second beholds with the artist's eye and his life finds beauty and a picture worthy of his best.

Life is not what it is, after all, but what we *see* it to be. The blinded soul may look and frown and despair; the beholding soul may *see* and look again and rejoice in the beauty of color, form and meaning.

The coach of the through train was filled with uninteresting, poorly-clad, wearied, common folk, spending their time in stupidly rereading newspapers, sleeping, chewing gum, munching apples or stale lunches, scolding tired children, or listlessly looking out the window.

"What a place to spend a couple of hours," said one local traveler.

"What fun," said his companion, "these are real people with life and hearts and friendships."

Before his sneering companion knew what was going on, this second stranger was making paper boats for the little tired children, and making them out of discarded newspapers. Soon the old woman beside whom he was seated became interested and began to make soldier-caps out of a pink edition. The conductor hailed the stranger whom he knew, and the stranger asked the boys why the conductor had a gold star and two gold stripes on his arm.

"He killed somebody in the war," shouted a five-year-old.

"No," said the stranger, "but that star means

he has worked 25 years for this railroad and the gold bars each mean five years more. Isn't he a fine man to work 35 years to carry good boys and girls and their mothers on the train?"

By the time he came through after passing the next station the conductor was the recognized hero of the road, for those urchins had told the story all the way through the car.

The stranger's destination came too soon and he left with a hearty "Goodbye—Good luck" from 20 throats and hearts.

His companion only *looked,* but the stranger *saw;* he *beheld.*

If we keep our eyes open and *see,* the world is beautiful and worth-while everywhere. A thorn-bush in the dying fall has a shade of brilliant wine-color, which the most skilful artist can scarcely duplicate.

A boy asked his dad where he would put a third eye if he had one. The father replied, "In the back of my head so I could work at my desk, and see my clerks, too." "Where'd you?" asked the father of the boy. "In the end of my finger," replied the boy, "and then I could put it through the knot-hole in the baseball fence and see the game."

This was a revised theory of Thoreau made for practical purposes.

The great text of John the Baptist in those early days was only this, "*Behold,* the Lamb of God."

WORTH-WHILE INVENTORY

A GOOD business man knows how he stands. He may neglect some things others regard as necessary, but he attends to his inventory. No excuse can avail if he fails to know what he is worth and the status of his business.

But what of life's real inventory? Suppose money and stock are satisfactory and health is undermined? What if material conditions are well-off but the real self, the soul-life is all wrong? A surplus in the bank will not make up for a weak heart, correct poor digestion, nor restore health nor will it save a soul, nor give peace of mind.

Suppose business energy and material industry destroy character and lessen, if not ruin, spiritual response. What a man has is of little relative value if a man's power to use and enjoy are injured or ruined.

A foreign critic has written that American business men are so intent upon earning that they fail to live and use. Was he right?

Whether the criticism is worthy or true it is at least suggestive. Life itself is short, and cannot be repeated. One generation quickly glides into another and decades pass with swiftness. Due to the compulsion of busy lives, before a man realizes the fact he is middle-aged or growing old. No speed has yet surpassed time.

The active, ambitious plodder keeps in high gear, frequently failing to give proper attention to

machinery, to say nothing of watching gas or oil. Suddenly and perhaps without warning there is a knock in the engine, or the human machinery comes to a stop altogether. He may be alone, or far from a garage or filling station. Friends stop, offer assistance, or are willing to tow him in; but his power to be self-reliant is gone and friends have their own destinations, and their own duties to perform. Loss and disaster must be faced alone, and results are personal.

Why not have the car looked over in time? Why not keep in shape through fore-thought rather than run into loss and disaster by after-thought? To return to our figure, why not take an inventory now and constantly?

Every true life has a soul as well as a body, a mind and heart as well as a business career. A Home is worth more than a store, a character more than a career. The school and church have had more to do with national success than the office and shop. Both add to value and are necessities, but brain has won out over brawn and heart wins over brain.

Co-operation succeeds where competition fails, and the man who thinks ahead outlives and outranks the man who plunges madly onward. Attainment is not of much value if the power to use and enjoy are forfeited. "Six days shalt thou labor" was the ancient law of life, but it was completed by the additional common-sense of rest for the seventh day. The rule of seven made valuable

the rule of six. The rest day was not an extra, but a day of spiritual Inventory.

God knew best. He worked and planned for man, not against him. "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

A scientist of no mean rank, has recently called attention to the fact that "the immediate coming students will give more attention to spiritual things than to material," and adds "herein lie life's greatest values."

The church does not need men so much as men need the church. The real question is not that of church-support by man, as man's support by the church. We have unwisely reversed the real order.

Suppose a successful man leaves a fortune to his children without leaving them example and character to use that fortune. What then is the result? Money and property inherited without the inbred power to use them aright have been a danger and blight. Sooner or later the inventory is forced upon prince and pauper alike.

Insurance companies are constantly forced to reject desired policies, because conditions are realized too late. How about Eternal Insurance? Is the body or bank more valuable than the immortal soul? Unbelief and doubt do not alter eternal verities. Death does not eliminate immortality. "Take Heed" is worth more as a slogan than "Safety First," or "Watch Your Step."

The man who goes calmly ahead after taking an inventory for the future loves life more than the man who thinks only of getting on, and acquiring quick success. "Let every man take heed how he build" is better advice than "Step Lively."

The present is the only time guaranteed in which to take an inventory of the soul. "A word to the wise is sufficient."

COURTESY AT THE WHEEL

IF statistics speak accurately over ten million people, men, women, even children, drive cars in the United States! All kinds of cars, big limousines, touring cars, runabouts, trucks, buses, delivery wagons. This vast collection makes traffic most complicated, especially in the congested sections of transportation in our cities.

Little has been said or written about the courtesy of driving, although much might be expressed. The whole situation is so new comparatively that no conventional laws have been established, and there is little as yet in the way of tradition. All, however, who drive have reason to appreciate the place courtesy may have on the road.

The highway is a meeting place of every phase of personality and disposition. The thoughtful and thoughtless, the kindly and selfish, the composed and restless, the careful and careless, the considerate and arrogant, the honest and dishonest, all meet, pass, bump and sometimes collide.

The horn is the mouthpiece of all the various kinds of drivers. It is the tongue of the car. It speaks for its owner, and largely expresses his attitude. Some horns almost say "good morning" with their quiet, kindly honk; some swear out, "Get out of the way," with an oath which is unmistakable. Some naturally reveal a gentleman or a lady, some give warning of a rough-neck or "road hog." It is not so much in the quality of sound as in the manner of use. A string of impulsive angry honks can say a whole string of swear words very impressively.

No law nor demand can control this voice and utterance of the horn! The one at the wheel is the agent; the horn is his expression; his individual attitude speaks through his horn.

Here courtesy may be exercised. The cars before him at a signal point do not start with his desired speed or promptness. An angry note of acute warning puts those before him in an instant attitude of irritability, and may even alarm the timid and excitable. His impetuous haste does no good, and gains no perceptible advance in speed. It may be entirely thoughtless on the driver's part, but the irritability has become contagious. Traffic is not assisted by this fevered condition, but in a sense hindered.

Motoring recently in a southern city I was impressed by the ease with which traffic seemed to clear itself. There was an absence of honking and rushing, and everyone seemed to be good-natured.

Why may this not become more universal? The horn is placed as a help and guide, not for purposes of threat nor anger.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath" the good book tells us. This is true with this mouthpiece of an automobile as well as with the human voice. "Grievous words stir up anger" with a vociferous horn as well as with an unruly tongue. Life after all is a highway, and voices have much to do with happiness and mutual esteem.

The gospel narrative takes no note of modern methods of conveyance, for the automobile came nineteen centuries later, but the principles are the same and pertain equally to modern life.

If the Man of Nazareth were driving today his horn would have been heard only when required and never to disturb, alarm or threaten another, whether that hearer was another driver or a pedestrian crossing the street.

Courtesy is not merely an adjunct of the drawing room or office, but is equally evident and valuable on the highway and amid the congestion of the traffic of our present day. As out of the heart the mouth speaketh, so from the driver the horn speaketh; a courteous soul is known by its sound and use.

MAKING FRIENDS

WE were talking together after a student luncheon at one of our great state universities. He was one of our successful younger pastors. I

was touched by the emphasis he put on a testimony as to the value of his student days in the seminary. He said, "I think I got more out of the friendship of the men who were studying with me than anything else." Ever since I have been weighing his remark. It touches anew the human element. It gives in a sense the secret of many a successful and useful life.

As we conversed I told him I felt much as he did, but I went back to my own college life at Amherst. The class was not so large that it prevented personal acquaintance with one's classmates. The fraternity spirit was strong but not in an exclusive sense. Men knew one another and came into constant and vital touch. There was not a man in my class I did not know, and we knew a large share of the men in college. They represented in a small way the after experience of life. Every type of youth and every part of our land was represented. To know these men was to know life in a very real sense.

In our conversation we spoke of the tendency of some men to simply do their work, and scarcely heed their fellows except when brought into necessary and formal contact. What a loss comes to this class of students. The friendships of student days may be the great treasure storerooms of life; to say nothing of the present joy and inspiration of their being.

We would never have had an "In Memoriam" if Tennyson and Hallam had not loved each other

and been companions in those early student days. Nothing in theological biography surpasses in delight the love and friendship of Bonar and McCheyne. When student days and courses of study become too crowded to enjoy human companionship and enrich friendship, *means* have lost their *end,* and preparation has destroyed completion.

It was said of Charles Cuthbert Hall that every man in his class at Williams came under his personal influence, and all unknown at the time to others, had been a personal friend.

As we grow older the little annoyances and eccentricities which separated us as youth minimize and fade away and we remember only the finer, stronger qualities. Friendship deepens with the years and old student friends grow dearer and more priceless as their ranks diminish.

Nothing in life should mean more to us than the friends we make as we go along. The life too busy to make them is indeed a lonely life, and overlooks the most worthwhile experience of living. "A man is known by his friends" we read. Yes, this is true, but many a man does not know enough to make friends at all. No matter what else he gains, he loses life's most delightful gift.

When a man's student friends always have a good word for him one is comparatively safe in trusting his worth and character. The Master said, "Henceforth I call you not servants but friends."

DOING THE NEXT THING

MANY lives seem overhung, as it were, with the motto, "Duties Undone," "Tasks Unperformed," or, if we were changing the figure and were to state the question which faces many a life, we would ask, "How can I ever catch up with my work?" "How is it possible to perform immediate duties, and also catch up with duties left over and forever undone?"

Perhaps it is true that almost every busy life has this experience very constantly, and sometimes work becomes so piled up that we literally feel like sweeping the whole top of the desk into the waste-paper basket and starting out anew. But the trouble is that no conscientious life can do this thing. The piled-up duties represent obligations and responsibilities.

Sometimes we get the courage to get an early start, make a long day and "clear the desk." We usually form resolves at such times that we will *never* let the thing occur again and will never allow matters to accumulate, but before we know it we lay aside one thing after another. One thing to be done following another thing to be done begins the pile of the unaccomplished, and we soon find ourselves in about the same predicament, if not a worse one, with indiscriminate accumulation.

What is the remedy? How can we escape? The old roll-top desk is still valuable from the standpoint of form and order and may be utilized aright,

but as a pigeon-hole contrivance and an instrument of postponement, it is still dangerous. But even the flat-top desk, with the idea of clearing one's work every day has not obviated the difficulty, nor remedied it.

The only way after all is *to do immediately* what we have to do, and cease to undertake to do the things which we cannot do.

There is a great unacknowledged nervous strain in allowing work to accumulate and crowd upon us, even when present duties seem to take all our time. Those who learn to do expeditiously and at once life's regular tasks are usually the happy and valuable members of society.

Maltbie D. Babcock started a tremendous tide of influence when he had his printer print the little motto on a card, the size of a postal card—"Do it now." It was long before the day of motto postals, but had much to do with starting it. It was a pioneer, not only in form of printing, but in its actual sentiment and text.

There are many things in life which will never be done unless they are done at once. The old scriptural truth has never worn out: "*Now* is the accepted time," "*Now* is the day of salvation." It not only applies to a great scriptural doctrine; it has its direct application to all life.

Immediate service after all is valuable service. Innumerable auto service stations have gained their start on the reputation of immediate service.

Not only is "procrastination a thief of time,"

but it is a thief of success and a thief of reputation, and we might add, a thief of character.

Just learn to postpone duty, and you will postpone good deeds, and soon you will find you are one of those who never accomplishes and can never be trusted.

There is a happiness and a character efficiency which grows out of immediate prompt service, which cannot be gained in any other way, and if we would make life happy, strong, wise and permanent, we must not postpone until tomorrow that which should be done today.

GO DEEPER

MOTORING recently with a close friend through Sim Park, in Wichita, Kansas, we passed a number of splendid great cottonwood trees, which were apparently dying prematurely. Upon inquiry we learned that the bed level of the Arkansas river nearby had been lowered recently and this had caused the death of these trees! Their roots did not have the tendency nor power to go down deeper into the soil and get nourishment. Rootlessness means fruitlessness, but arrested roots mean death.

How many human beings there are whose lives are fruitless because rootless, but how many more die intellectually and morally because they have not the power to *go deeper*. Arrested development, unseen, means death. Arrested outreach

causes the unnourished to wither and die. Superficiality and death are related, in fact, they are father and son.

Cottonwoods are useful because they live easily on surface moisture, and because they grow rapidly and afford quick shade and protection. Oaks also are useful, but grow slowly, for the roots of the oak go down deep. The life of the cottonwood is short and its death sudden and sure. The oak strengthens itself by ever deepening its roots and entwining about and anchoring to its underground security. Its roots reach deeper and deeper to gain moisture and life. The oak defies the hurricane and it bends and knots its limbs into ever stronger sturdiness.

The age we live in demands a deeper foundation. To go up rapidly without going down steadily fosters destruction and death.

Education without moral purpose has only surface nourishment. "He who educates the mind without training the will injures society," writes one of our modern critics. *Go deeper.* "I am come that ye might have life, and have it more abundantly," wrote the Great Teacher. But this "abundant life" must *go deeper.* The hidden things of God are only reached by the power of a life to send its roots down into the depths where the soul finds nourishment.

Who wants an education in order to frame a diploma or flaunt a degree? Mind training means power to grasp and to use truth.

Human life is not a parade ground, but a field of battle. Mental power is not evidenced in a dictionary, nor encyclopedia, but in their resourcefulness and use.

The age has ever deepening problems, but to solve them we need ever deepening roots. The statesman sees into the distances and thinks deeper than his fellow. The mere politician lives on the surface and sees only near at hand. He aims only for the swift-coming election and is satisfied with quick, unrooted growth.

A smattering of knowledge surely is a dangerous thing, but the fool is satisfied. Principles stand the test of time, and create character, both individual and national.

Livingstone refused the pomp and glory of Britain's lionizing that he might discover and redeem a darkened continent. Wendell Phillips suffered the ignominy and ridicule of his cherished friends that he might dig freedom for a buried race. Lincoln sank the nation's roots deeper that he might establish and preserve the Union in an unstable and disintegrating soil.

Pride, egotism, dishonesty, the spoils system and vulgar notoriety are the illegitimate children of rootless progeny and will scarcely live through their own generation. But truth, honor, justice, Christ-likeness are going deeper in root, higher in esteem and stronger in character, and will live eternally. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

APPRAISING LIFE'S VALUES

IN talking recently with a friend who had passed through deep sorrow in the loss of a lovely daughter he said "My wife and I have learned the real values of life a little better, and that some things do not matter nor are some things really important."

How true this is, and what a storehouse of worthwhile philosophy it contains. Many of us only learn through loss or sorrow the real values of life. We count not the cost nor appraise the value until they are forever taken from us. This not only pertains to sorrow or death but is evident where life remains to those who will see.

Youth is frequently abused and disregarded until it has flown; health neglected and injured until alas it has departed! Home, the joy of little children, is overlooked until the wee tots have grown into youth. We have forgotten to reread the old seer and poet who advised us to "Remember now Thy Creator in the days of thy youth, when the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them."

When someone tritely says "Blessings brighten as they take their leave," we acquiesce but fail to appropriate the truth of the remark. Time, accident, sorrow, loss, even death itself, will force upon us the relative values of life. But, why not gain this knowledge practically before it is too

late? One reason we fail to do this is seen in the false values we put upon unimportant things.

Discrimination is as valuable as economy or industry. Many a man who is remarkable in his industry, and who prides himself on his economy is senseless in discriminating as to the use of his time and strength. He fails to give intelligent thought to the relative values of certain habits already formed, and then deplores the fact that he cannot have his pie and eat it as well.

Choices have always been a very vital part in the development and enjoyment of true character, and the one who has learned to choose aright is the worthwhile discriminator and the right appraiser of life.

"Why does Doctor J. always go home so early from the club, or leave at a fixed time after dinner?" asked a friend. "Oh, he always reads when he gets home! You know he is an authority in more than one branch of literature." Well, you may reply, "Who wants to be a literary authority anyway?" Few may, but extra study helps everyone, yet Dr. J. has had to pay the price for his learning in his time discrimination.

"How has Mr. Blank built up such a remarkable business, and how has he developed such exceptional discipline and loyalty in his office?" "He has been at that office promptly and regularly, and has dealt firmly but kindly with his foremen and clerks for over twenty years" was the reply. He appraised values properly in his business.

When all is said and done and life is nearing its conclusion what really has been worthwhile after all? Accumulations and material possessions or affection and devotion? Furniture or friendship? Art or heart? Plenty or peace? Real estate or intelligence? Health or invalidism? Gold or love? Things seen or things eternal?

These are the questions which youth must decide rightly if old age is to benefit and life be lived to its fullest.

WATCH YOUR STEP

AN editor of one of our recent papers closed an article with the sentence: "It takes a lifetime to build up a good reputation; it may be lost in a moment." Where this writer left off, we will begin. It is worth while to "watch your step." A strong healthful body, vigorous and alert may be injured for life by a single mis-step, or an accident may occur which will entail months of suffering and permanent injury—all because of a single mis-step.

In talking some years ago with one who had erred in his life with a single misdeed, and brought criticism and disgrace upon himself and his whole family, he replied: "It is not fair; here I have lived a consistent upright life for twenty-five years in this community, and a single unpremeditated, impulsive act throws me out utterly, impairs the chances of my children and apparently ruins my home."

Although his word is rather strong, and his cry

of anguish evident, there is much truth in what he said. We cannot be too careful in taking every step of the way. A fall is not occasioned by several mis-steps, but by a *single* mis-step, and life is, after all, a pathway, and most men walk.

There are many ways of falling: one may slip, stumble, may be knocked down by another; and if it is dark, it is far more difficult to walk without accident. Of course, we take for granted that accidents do not of necessity happen. A man may walk a lifetime without falling or injuring himself, but how fully the records of accident insurance companies and hospitals show how the unexpected happens, and how serious the results may be.

That which we consider in a material sense should be felt doubly in the moral life, and a man must guard his step carefully and constantly.

Little children have parental guidance and strong arms near them to catch them if they stumble or fall. This is usually when they are learning to walk, and when they are in the immature years which need constant watchfulness. Later the child, older, stands on his own feet and goes his own way. If he walks properly and avoids accident, the world takes no notice of him, except to accept his moral life and progress; but if he stumbles or falls, attention is quickly aroused and the world notices, inquires and talks.

Moral failings and falls are the cause of comment even more than physical. They shock a deep sense; they are less expected. As we grow older,

the temptation is an increasing rather than a decreasing one. This may partly be due to the natural opposition which men have to the monotonies of life as one grows older. Ambitions and energies lessen alertness; life seems to lose some of its peculiar and effective energy; things are taken for granted.

A man does not square his shoulders for the strife. He considers himself out of danger. Habit seems to be a synonym of character, and he relies too much upon human strength. Just as a weak link makes an otherwise strong chain valueless, so a flaw or weakness in character renders a life inefficient. Men say, "He is all right, but—" That single expression loses the day—he has slipped; he has fallen, when men have expected him to be straight and to "watch his step."

It is a little more difficult to keep our step today when the tension of life is so strong; when unconsciously we are hastening and hurrying about our daily tasks; when we are thinking about the many things to be done instead of the way we are walking; when we are looking at the goal rather than to each footstep; when on all sides people are running past us; when there is so much carelessness in thought, word and action; when the ambulance stands almost at the curb to pick a man up when he falls; when promiscuous excuses are made for those who do stumble, and when definitions and standards seem to have lost something of their accurate meaning. It is hard to "watch your step"

under these conditions, but *just now* the world needs this watchfulness and care.

The Master said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." It is easier for us to watch our step when we keep step with Him. The popular modern hymn, "And He walks with me and He talks with me" has a place in the present daily life of the Christian if we are to "watch our step."

"AT THE WHEEL" RESPONSIBILITY

THOSE who drive a car know something of the embarrassment and annoyance of "back-seat drivers." Not that temperaments do not differ, and although some never suggest and are never ill-at-ease, others cannot control their feelings or nerves, and are always worried. Those who have driven themselves are less liable to attempt to exercise authority from the rear, but even then it is largely a matter of temperament and control, and nervous natures speak out. No matter what the occasion or interference, however, the one "at the wheel" controls, and is responsible for the situation.

A good driver is *never diverted* from his task by word or deed, whether or not the unexpected or remarkable takes place. He has one track before him and for that he alone is responsible. He is "at the wheel." His eyes, hands, feet and wits are not only his own safeguards, but are the guardians of each other passenger as well. An instant's sleepy unconsciousness and an accident may occur.

The one "at the wheel" has no right to accept his task unless with it he assumes his responsibility. That which seems so easy and natural, and which really grows to be so, must not be considered lightly, nor regarded indifferently.

The man "at the wheel" has another responsibility as well. He is responsible for acting aright when those whom he may meet on the highway are at fault.

Failure to size up situations instantly may be excusable, but excuses, no matter how just, do not prevent accident. The fact that the other driver did wrong will not heal a broken hip, nor recall a life.

The one "at the wheel" must keep his wits alert for the other driver if he is to be master of the road.

The one passing on the road may fail to observe signals; may never dim his lights; may "hog the road," or may even cut in ahead, or turn suddenly into a crossroad. The one "at the wheel" must be ready to act instantly; in fact, almost by intuition. Insurance and law may be responsible to repair machines, and pay obligations, but they cannot meet the exigencies of collision, nor restore broken bones, nor call back life.

"Look at that wonderful sunset," shouted the back-seat, but the driver smiled and without even a side-glance said, "I'm looking at the curving road and the sun must set alone."

Distracted drivers could reveal the cause of many an accident, but some never live to tell the tale.

A good driver may not be as speedy nor daring as others, but when "at the wheel" he does "this one thing."

Statistics reveal that more accidents occur from sleep than from interference, and all other causes combined. If sleepy, or with subtle, creeping tendency thereto a good driver will stop or transfer the wheel.

But after all, life is our highway and every soul a driver. The gospel tells us that "if thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light." Every life is "at the wheel." Side issues distract and annoy. Back-seat drivers are forever commenting and suggesting, but he who knows his duty will watch the road and keep firm control of the wheel.

Lives have suffered and been slain because of a single careless glance or an instant falling asleep.

Watching the road, and controlling the wheel pertains to more than an automobile, and he who taught us the way, said, "Follow me."

THE REWARDS OF THOUGHTFULNESS

WE had just left the train and were starting down a long, steep stone stairway to the level of the station. A redcap had relieved me of my bags. Beside me a feeble old lady was struggling with a heavy suitcase, and naturally had several small bags or packages as well. Without hesitation I asked if I might carry her suitcase, and with a smile of surprise she acquiesced. At the

bottom of the stairs I reluctantly set it down, waiting for her, as I was going the opposite way from the station.

She came more slowly, but upon reaching the gate was met by a strong, lovely girl whom I took to be her daughter or granddaughter. Their affection seemed most genuine.

The smile of gratitude the old lady gave me and her gracious manner set me to thinking. In a moment we had separated, total strangers, but her smile and spirit remained.

I had been troubled about a minor affair and was perturbed and irritable when I left the train, but now all that was gone. A simple, almost unnoticeable deed of kindness had changed the day for me, and I entered quite sympathetically into the sunshine of a beautiful morning. All was the result of a bit of kindness and thoughtfulness.

The good we may do others, or the help we may incidentally give, are small compared with the compensations received. The rewards of thoughtfulness are self-evident. The blessings of kindness done are intensive. Anything which gives happiness is likely to bring happiness.

The "cup of cold water" given may quench the thirst of a wan traveler, but it also strengthens the character of the messenger of comfort. "All for the joy of the doing." Joyous life is the result of expression. This spirit may be cultivated by use. To be alert to help others creates courtesy and general good will.

A little lad quickly left his group of companions to help an old man over a slippery crossing. Before the man could turn to thank him the boy had doffed his cap and was running back to join in the fray with his gang.

"Who is the lad?" asked the old man.

A stranger replied, "Only a kid."

"Well," said the old man, "he will be a success, whoever he is." And he was right. Success is not gained merely through the acquisition of possessions or in large enterprises, but in the worthwhile attitude one holds toward life.

Not "what can you do?" nor "what do you own?" are the important questions in life, but "what are you?"

Impulse to help another is a very natural trait with most of us as we travel life's way, but frequently we feel too busy or are too self-centered to yield to the impulse.

Sometimes valuable friendships result from life's merest incidents. A life story like that of Ellery Walter in his fascinating book, "The World On One Leg," shows this. His very obstacle proved his asset because of his spirit and inward good nature. Pain and suffering turned his April showers into rainbows all along his way.

The Master gave us an added thought when he said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these little ones ye have done it unto me."

This is the "angels unaware" business which makes life always worth while. For little deeds

of thoughtful helpfulness concentrate light within, and remove the wrinkles from one's own face. Every congested roadway has some tree-climbing Zaccheus if we look up, and every well-side has its Woman of Samaria.

If we are wrangling, "who is to be greatest," we are likely to overlook the little children playing in our midst, and in our contentions we may forget also the real meaning of life. When we become too eager and selfish to be thoughtful, the real rewards of life itself will escape us and be given to others.

THE BLESSINGS OF GRATITUDE

AS the rose is the most beautiful and lovely blossom, in color, form and fragrance, among the flowers, so gratitude is a very queen among the graces of human life. It not only blesses and cheers the recipient, but enriches and deepens the thankful soul. As its absence saddens so its presence gladdens. No matter how many weeds or crude ungainly flowers life's garden may contain, the sweet, lovely blossom of gratitude draws happy attention and commands response.

"Why are you taking this long, trying journey?" asked a fellow traveler of one who was enduring the heat and inconvenience of a dusty accommodation train on a stifling August day. The reply came quickly, "I am going to see a dear old lady who gave me my start when I was a lad."

Success, popularity, wealth, position had not robbed this noble man of the sweetest and rarest of love's tokens! He remembered and was grateful. Ten lepers were cleansed but only one returned to give thanks. The Saviour, Himself, praised this characteristic most highly.

"There is a lad I greatly admire," said a college president one day last fall as I walked with him on the campus. "He will make a rare minister if I mistake not. His parents are poor and ignorant, but ambitious and thrifty; they have given up everything that he may be educated, but the lad never forgets them. His first thought seems to be for them, and he never neglects the slightest courtesy toward them. He is a king among his classmates, and loved by all."

Success and position may become futile and wearisome if we hold memory back, and forget those who have contributed. Love looks backward as well as forward. Old age may be sweetened and brightened by thoughts of those who have helped along life's way.

"My son always writes to me every Sunday," said a dear, crippled mother as she smiled to her pastor. "He never forgets; I know he loves me."

"What beautiful roses," I remarked, as I left the sick-room in one of our hospitals. "Yes," said my friend, an aged and lonely man of refined but sad life, "they came from a friend of my earlier days whom I once had the chance of helping in a day of crisis. He has never forgotten my birthday,

and always sends me the choicest roses." I can see that radiant, happy face now as he told me of this mark of gratitude.

One of the most beautiful incidents recalled in a long ministry comes to my mind in this connection. The great church was filled with guests at the wedding ceremony. As the husband kissed the bride at the altar, my eyes caught sight of her parents who through long patient years had worked on together amid constant trials. The father stooped to kiss his wife, and standing near I caught his words, "We owe it all to you."

Life can bear up under heavy burdens and amid varied losses and disappointments if the rose of gratitude blooms in the garden. A simple heartfelt "thank you" is the very balm of life and quickens the pulse of love with peace and joy. This is the quiet melody that is heard above the noise and discord of life's way, and calls to mind the Saviour's promise, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."

WHISPERING IN CHURCH

THE unconscious habit of whispering in Church services, or in public gatherings, is more prevalent than realized by those who indulge. Those who are the offenders, without due consideration, would probably be the first to say, "How can anyone be so thoughtless?" In an experience of over thirty years I have never yet called the matter to

one's attention without some such reply, and it has been given honestly and genuinely. To correct such misdemeanor publicly is sure to offend, and is often an evidence of irritability or temper, but to refer to it through personal interview tactfully, or by wise correspondence will seldom offend. It should be corrected, however, for if allowed to continue it will annoy increasingly, and destroy the reverence of God's house as well.

This thoughtless habit is not confined to religious services, but the evidence of annoyance is more readily displayed and more willingly where others about the offender have paid for their seats. A concert or entertainment of any character may be injured if not ruined by a whispering or undertone talker just behind you. If authorities demand bared heads, why should they not demand silence as well? There is no more conclusive mark of poor breeding than this sort of thing, and yet those who indulge are usually ignorant of their annoyance, if not unconscious of doing it.

Nothing so annoys a public speaker. Silence is not only a virtue, but a mark of interest and respect. How much more true this is in the house of God. Reverence is an essential to vital worship.

Of course there are many temptations to "talk in church." Friends sit near you whom you have not recently seen. Questions suggest themselves as to the identity of strangers. One wonders if another has heard of the illness of a mutual friend. The very progress of the service and the thoughts

of the speaker suggest interesting comments. Again one near you may be slightly deaf and you wish him not to lose a single point. He shows by his face he did not get it.

I have known a dutiful son to sit next to his beloved mother who was in church regularly, and write important sentences in the sermon all the way through. He always had a pad and pencil, and he did it so quietly and modestly that no one was annoyed.

Whisperers are thoughtless but thoughtlessness is nothing more or less than selfishness, and should have no place nor be countenanced in the place of prayer and worship.

Sometimes whole families are disturbed. I have known those who would like to attend church kept away by their whispering neighbors. I have known others who have changed their pews. I have seen the troubled faces of those who were annoyed, but were too timid or too courteous to mention it.

A sad condition in this evil is that frequently the best of people are the offenders, but piety as well as courtesy shows itself real by quiet lips where others are worshiping. The reverence of God's house cannot be encouraged too much, and the natural bowing in prayer as one enters the pew will lend help to its cultivation.

There is nothing more impressive and inspiring than a filled church where all are silent and worshipful.

But you say, what if someone speaks to you in a whisper, what can one do but reply? A look will answer usually, and without humiliating the questioner one can show by that look or single word the proprieties of the place and hour. A Christ-like spirit speaks without words and a word of explanation after the service may overcome permanently in a most tactful way a thoughtless, habitual whispering, for usually the whisperer has been utterly ignorant of the evil in which he has had a part.

THE JOY OF INDUSTRY

(An Appreciation of Switzerland)

ONE cannot spend time in a mountain town or hamlet in Switzerland without appreciating the industry and quiet dignity of the Swiss. They are unspoiled as a nation by tourist and traveler. Although ready and willing in all forms of service they continue to live as their fathers lived before them, and seem to take toil and industry as a matter of course without thought of complaint or hardship. Everyone works, and works cheerfully. From childhood to old age all are busy. Every natural resource is utilized. The fields are tilled intensively, and provide what is needed for nourishment and sustentation. Without anxiety, they use all the means at hand. The women and children work from early morn till early evening, and "Early to bed and early to rise" pertains quite universally.

The hayfields reach to the high sides of their Alpine hills and mountains. The scythe is the machine utilized by hand; and the whole family are haymakers. Men draw the haycarts, sometimes most heavily loaded, and it is a frequent picture, at close of day, to see father and mother drawing the new-cured hay back to the low, stone-roofed barn; the little child stowed upon the top of the load, the youthful boys and girls helping and carrying the wooden rakes and wooden pitchforks, and even the faithful dog, with strap or rope harness, helping with the load as he tugs along at the side of his master. All seem happy and sunburnt, often singing a song as they pull the heavy load.

The old women, and there are many of them, are seen drawing the babies along the quiet streets in little home-made carts or baby carriages. There are children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Strangers and autoists do not seem to molest nor trouble the Swiss in their steady, satisfying home duties. Their houses are neat and evidence thrift everywhere. The wood is carefully cut and piled. There are even bundles of branches and twigs tied and reserved for use as fuel.

The village water-trough is the place of common cleaning and washing, even the windows being taken to this universal bathtub for cleansing.

Every home seems to be a place of industry with work for every one. But the Swiss enjoy their leisure as well, and Sunday finds them dressed in

their better clothes and walking or visiting in quiet, natural pleasure. They are church-goers as well, and faithful!

The movie, or cinema, has little place among them. Few automobiles are seen or owned. Bicycles are used in large numbers, but more from their economy of time and distance than for mere pleasure. Walking and climbing are taken for granted, and complaint, if it exists, is rare and unpopular.

Switzerland is a land of industry, and work here is a blessing rather than a curse.

It is also noticeable that Swiss work is *well done*. No clothes hang out on their clotheslines that are not as spotless as the snow that flies. Their houses are well-built and substantial. Their fame as road-builders is worldwide; their schools are attractive and ample! In fact, they live content with industry, thrift and good-nature prevalent on all sides.

The world may well find an inspiring example of diligence and industry in these simple, strong children of the mountains. Faithful and devoted lives have done much toward making their land of beauty and vision the world's greatest playground.

Above all else these sturdy Swiss people enjoy and value their own country and its natural beauty; and one is inspired by the joy with which they visit and appreciate their own land in its unrivaled valleys, mountain peaks, waterfalls, lakes and peaceful meadows.

THE VALUE OF A SMILE

CHEERFULNESS is a valuable asset in business and religion. The man with a smile will defeat and control his enemies; an unhappy or vexed nature loses with friend or foe. In the hallway of a noted hospital hangs a notice which reads, "Never utter a discouraging word in this hospital! You should come here for the purpose of helping. Keep your hindering, sad looks for other places, and if you cannot smile don't go in." No doubt the statistics of recovery there are high, and the motto is at least illuminating. The world needs sunshine. Nothing impresses the traveler in the Far East more than the wrinkles and colorless faces of heathendom.

Joy seems frequently to be an unknown quantity, an undiscovered virtue. Christianity rolls up the curtain of universal sadness and depression with the text, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." The angels sang to the Bethlehem shepherds, and began their story to the world with "Behold we bring you glad tidings of great joy." Joy is the second "fruit of the Spirit." First comes love, then joy.

An unhappy Christian is a stigma on the very world itself.

Modern science and practice have asserted that sunshine kills more disease germs than all other remedies combined. Radium is "Sunshine Condenser." The coal of the earth is stored up sunshine.

Far more muscular effort goes with a frown or wrinkle than with a smile. The corners of the mouth turned up show a happy face, turned down an ugly one. The laughter and smile of a little child will dispel grief from the sorrowing, and wipe the eyes of those who weep.

The "abundant life" Jesus came to bring is introduced by the "fullness of joy." A rose or flower pot in the window of an invalid is worth more than terraced gardens on the estate of a grouch.

Sir William Osler, the great medical authority, once said to a group of physicians, "Learn to consume your own smoke. The air is darkened by the murmuring and whimpering of men and women over non-essentials, over trivial vexations and discomforts that are inevitable incidents in the hurly-burly and strain of every-day life. Things cannot always go your way.

"Learn to accept in silence life's aggravations, cultivate the habit of taciturnity, do not talk about your troubles, consume your own smoke with an extra draught of hard work, so that those about you may not be annoyed with the dust and soot of your complaining. We are here not to get all we can out of life for ourselves, but to try to make the lives of others happier."

Robert Louis Stevenson was an invalid most of his life, but he is known as an apostle of sunshine. What home will not be joy-filled where the philosophy of the "Little Tin Soldier" of Eugene Field is used and practiced?

"While here at home, in shining day
We around the sunny garden play,
Each little Indian sleepy-head
Is being kissed and put to bed."

A joyous childhood is the very best heritage to give a child. Home and happiness should mean the same thing to a growing child.

Humor in literature has often erased bitterness and illustrated good will. That is why the cartoonist is frequently paid a larger salary than the editor. Lincoln is loved today for his kindness and wit as much as honored for his insight and rugged character.

The frosts and snows of winter melt into saturating moisture and nourishment of spring flowers and autumn harvests when Old Sol begins to show his strength.

The smile is a reflection of sunshine evidenced in human faces, and concentrated in loving character.

The Saviour of men drove away the false ambitions of envious followers by introducing smiling children into their midst and saying "Except ye become like unto a little child ye shall not know my kingdom."

THE LITTLE STRANGER

IT was on one of those sultry train-trips to the West. The day was warm and oppressive; the Pullman crowded and promiscuous. Rather wearied with writing, and restless, I sought the

diversion of walking through the train. Everyone seemed drowsy and irritable. A little girl of perhaps four or five was crying and pulling at her mother's dress as the mother was trying to play cards with three companions. The mother spoke harshly to the tired child, who started to scream wildly, much to the added confusion of an overstrained lot of passengers. I stopped and asked the child if she did not want to take a little walk. She stopped crying at once, first in surprise, and then took my proffered hand eagerly and started down the aisle.

Soon we found an empty seat and taking her on my lap I asked her if she did not want to hear a story. It was the old tale of "once there was a little boy who had a dog," etc. The familiar sounds of the farm and the barnyard followed, and one story after another was simply told until the little face became happy and contented.

A sister of charity across the aisle smiled. She looked as if she was ordinarily afraid to smile. When the child became restless we went over and spoke to the sister and her fellow sisters (they never seem to travel alone). The prayer-books lay open before them, and they all seemed to suddenly realize that it was not wrong to speak to a strange man. The little child patted their white hands, and told them they were "nice". Others in the car were smiling. The mother had stopped the boring card game and took the little child up in her arms where she quickly slept.

A colored porter was reading a little book nearby. As I passed I found it was a small copy of the New Testament. I saw he was reading the Gospel of John. Stopping I asked him if he could turn to the place where the Saviour talked with little children. I then asked him if he knew the most wonderful verse in the Bible, and turned to the 16th verse of the third chapter. He had it marked. He was pleased and thanked me heartily. Everyone was smiling. The heat of the day was forgotten. The very atmosphere of the car seemed changed. I went back to my work refreshed. A little child, "the little stranger" had done it all.

What a joy and blessing little children may be! But the blessings of life may become a trial if we become tired and thoughtless of children's need of friendliness and comfort. Overworked and wearied mothers need help at times, if they are to value aright their sacred and priceless responsibility. A word of sympathy or a simple deed of kindliness will call back their loving sense of motherhood. Can we recall how patient our own mothers were with us through those long, and still all too short, years of our own childhood? "The little stranger" had been a great blessing in disguise to all of us in the car.

Our lives will be greater if we take time to see the latent joy in the wee children who get tired and know not what to do. And how they rest us in the process! Greatness is revealed in the little things of life.

The story is told that one Sunday afternoon they could not find Phillips Brooks when he was sorely needed. A note was handed up to the Curate who was taking his place in Trinity Church, asking where the bishop could be found. The reply came back where he was. They went to the old tumbledown house designated, and found him on the floor, revelling in play with three little children whose mother he had sent to the afternoon vesper service.

David Swing missed a wedding one afternoon, and they finally found him making mud pies on the sands of the Lake Shore Drive with two little girls in his parish. True, he had forgotten an important duty, but everyone forgave the great poet-preacher, even the bride, when they knew the facts.

"A little child shall lead them" is a prophecy which the ages have verified, and "little strangers" may become angels if we have a mind and heart like the Man of Nazareth.

TAKING ON NEW LIFE

AFTER a long, hard Winter, such as many of us have sometimes experienced, the coming of the Spring is anticipated with genuine pleasure. The first touch of spring weather, with the higher sun and its marvelous glow gives a conscious thrill to all, even if the exhilaration is not defined or advertised. It is the old sense of renewing life which reveals itself in bursting bud and singing bird.

It is not hard for anyone to be cheerful and happy on a spring morning. The inward condition gives place to the outward glow, and no matter how tangled the problems of life may seem, for a moment all is forgotten, and one is under the spell and thrill of a new life.

The Easter season with all its splendid significance finds its expression here, too, but with a deeper and more lasting meaning, for with a realization of the spiritual life there is greater effort to overcome and "he that overcometh inheriteth."

Ere we know it the spring will be upon us and the Easter season will be heralded by green lawns, fragrant blossoms and happy faces everywhere.

Months have sped by since the Christmas season gave us the blessed note: "Joy to the world, the Lord has come!" but now the glad, happy chorus of life is in another theme: "The Lord is Risen!" With Him we, too, must rise, and in the spirit of this glorious theme live above the things that annoy and trouble; that abuse and injure.

The Winter is past; the Spring is upon us with its life and energy, its hope and purpose, its verdure and loveliness, its warmth and gladness. Winter garments are stowed away; the step is more alert; the voice clearer and the handclasp firmer, for life is renewing itself and all nature is joining in the chorus of happiness.

Ere we realize it, the season will have changed and summer will be upon us with its out-door life and its growth and development, color, song and

fragrance all about us. Freedom and gaiety in the open, and quickly following will come the joy of the young people in their commencements of schools and colleges; their summer outings, and a glad, happy world living in God's great out-of-doors!

May the spiritual lesson make its impress and may the life of Faith and Hope and Love within create the life without, for "as a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

BUSY IN SOLITUDE

THE niece and biographer of Emily Dickinson, Martha Dickinson Bianchi, in the introduction of her new volume of "The Complete Poems," refers to her solitude as "never idle." She says, "Most of all she was always busy. It takes time even for genius to crystallize the thought with which her letters and poems are crammed."

> "The soul selects her own society,
> Then shuts the door."

It is a reiteration of that ancient truth, "Work is worship, toil is holy." The busy life is after all the happy life, and the life that claims its right of solitude has a reserve of power and blessing which the busy mart never values or appreciates. Our lives are mostly too busy with the affairs of life and the noise of the throng. Moses needed his forty years of solitude amid Sinai's loneliness before

he could return to a burdened people's problem and release his mind.

David learned the eternal poetry of the age-lasting Psalms in the solitudes of the majestic quiet hillsides and the silent companionships of the distant stars. Paul needed his Arabia before he could voice and pen his throbbing letters or utter his impassioned wisdom.

But that solitude was not idle nor listless; it was filled with the energy of active thinking and constant application.

We are all too busy with the whirl of our surroundings, too much controlled by the whirring of machinery and the voices of the talkers of idleness. "In the secret of His presence, how my soul delights to hide" is needed in the hymnology of the present Christian life if we are to know the worth of our faith and the value of time.

It is all wrong to feel that time spent alone is time wasted. He who values the necessity of self-companionship uses his time alone to bless his day and vitalize his mission to others.

The difficulty with many of us is that we work so incessantly and devotedly upon our outward duties that we bring to our moments of solitude only tired bodies and exhausted minds and hearts. Our best selves we give to the multitude and our worn-out selves to our moments of solitude; the result is idleness and languor. The spring of sparkling water bubbles up from beneath; such streams are ever fresh and exhaustless. Thinking minds

must labor alone and have time so to do if thought is to find its expression in lasting word and telling utterance. Men must "toil upward through the night," if the world is to be inspired and enlightened.

In one of the busiest sessions of the General Assembly of one of our higher church courts one of the leaders was found alone in an unnoticed vestibule quietly studying his New Testament. In a few moments he was called to the platform to speak, and thrilled the whole Assembly with his words of convincing argument and exact definition. His moments of busy solitude were secret. The roots ran deep.

After a continued heated discussion among many leaders in an important conference the wise leader declared a recess of half an hour with the admonition, "Let us all go by ourselves alone and give time to thinking this whole thing through. I beg of you not to talk it over further with one another, but rather go into thoughtful solitude and personal meditation and prayer: then," he added, "we will come together and act." The result was a delight and solution of a most difficult problem.

There is a lesson in this for us all. Solitude has become to too many of us a matter of lazy listlessness instead of a time for the finest judgment and keenest thinking. When the Master had a difficult and hard task to perform he sought the wilderness and the woods, and came out ready.

"Into the woods my Master went." No wonder he came out of the woods strong and prepared.

VALUING ONE'S COUNTRY

THERE is a striking patriotism seen among nations when times of international discord or war occur, and loyalty to one's flag and country is seen everywhere; but there is even a more vital fidelity in the appreciation evidenced in times of ordinary and regular life. One is sometimes heard to complain of his nation or government simply because all does not go well with his own plans or affairs. The land in which we live is the most privileged land on earth today. The best of the nations has been drawn to our shores, and living is more filled for the average man, woman or child with more comforts, opportunities and pleasures than in any land on the globe. We should cultivate a spirit of constant appreciation and gratitude. We should also plan to see more of our country that we may be personally informed as to her resources, attainments, her varied climates and her unlimited centers of beauty and recreation.

Many who have crossed the sea frequently and who know the history, art and scenery of Europe and the Old World sometimes know comparatively nothing of their own country. There are lakes, mountains and parks in the United States which equal and, in some instances, surpass the glories of the Alps, or the grandeur of the Fjords. There are mountain highways which tower in height and majestic view above the famous passes of Switzerland and Italy. These facts do not detract from

the beauty of other countries, but should be realized by the American traveler. Although of comparatively recent development and, in many cases, almost untouched, still they are unsurpassed in expanse and resource.

There are few states in the United States which cannot boast of natural forests, lakes, woods, plains and scenery which rival worthily the glories of the world.

"See America First" has become almost a slogan for American travel, but it contains in a sense a most valuable truth. No mountain traveler who has seen Lockvale or Odessa lakes in Estes Park, or Lake Louise in Glacier Park, or who has visited the Grand Canyon of Arizona, or seen the sublime coloring of the canyon in Yellowstone can fail to compare them favorably with any of the Old World's best out-of-doors.

The powerful and majestic sweep of Niagara, the woods and streams of the Adirondacks, the fascinating beauty of the White Mountains, the deep green forest mountains of the Alleghanies, the valleys and hills of Old Virginia, the quiet seclusion of the Carolinas; to say nothing of matchless California, the glades and seashores of Florida, the great Northwest or the lake and forest regions of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota; or the newly realized beauty of the Black Hills of the Dakotas! These and countless other national beauty spots surpass the natural attraction of any other nation on earth.

There is a sense of gratitude due to Almighty God who has endowed our country with this vastness of beauty and loveliness. As we sing, "My Country 'Tis of Thee," let us never skip those words of description:

"I love thy rocks and rills
Thy woods and templed hills."

But rather let us rejoice that He has made us citizens in so great a land and nation.

THE MAN YOU DO NOT LIKE

OUR temperaments and dispositions have much to do, of course, with our likes and dislikes. And the natural tendency of life is to keep just as far away as possible from the people whom we do not like. Not that we would be discourteous, or avoid such people openly if we saw them approaching us, but, in so far as it is consistent with good manners, we would rather keep apart from them. They irritate us. We do not like their looks. We dislike their manner. In fact, we are in a critical attitude, no matter what they do. It is difficult for us not to say things against them when their names are mentioned. Their very personalities seem to have the effect upon us of stroking a cat the wrong way.

Then there is another type of people who neither attract nor repel us. They are negative in their effect upon us. We never give them a second

thought. Even if one paused to think about them, life would seem too short for us to give much time or attention to them.

After all, is this attitude toward either of these two classes the right one for a practical Christian to sustain or encourage?

What are we in the world for—to please ourselves? To gather around us a little circle of friends, whom we may especially enjoy? To fraternize only with those who please and charm us? Or is life—real life—a matter of helpfulness? Most of us have lived long enough to discover that some of the finest friends we have ever made did not attract us at first sight; neither did we attract them. We have occasionally discovered, unexpectedly, qualities and characteristics of rare value. "Bashfulness" or modesty perhaps had hindered more open disclosure. We have found a noble nature behind a homely face, revealed by a sacrificial act awkwardly done. We have discovered character in ruggedness; grace in angularity; beauty in ashes.

We have also frequently found the happiest kind of life among the unselfish. Many of these very people had no longing to be approved on the basis of beauty, attractiveness or even personality. They had an object in life far separated from any such interpretation. As we think of them we are led to look within ourselves, and to wonder just what our own object in life really is. Is it to give or to receive? To help or to hinder? To appreciate or to criticise?

Years ago I found a great fascination, within my range of parish duty, in going to the very bottom of any misunderstanding or apparent dislike that I discovered and finding out its cause, removing the difficulty, and creating, if possible, a friendliness. Little disagreeable experiences are bound to arise in every life, and a parish made of well-meaning Christians is not free from them. One person does not like something said in the pulpit; another was treated unkindly in the pew; some one repeated something (always unwise) which you never said; a newspaper reporter misquoted you; little estrangements arose and you heard of them. Our first inclination in such cases was to assume a haughty "don't-care" spirit, solacing one's self with the thought that there were plenty of others and we could spend our time with them and make other friends. Then the thought would come, Why are we here? Are we to help or to hinder? Ignore unpleasant things, or encourage good? It became a satisfaction to look into such cases and solve them, and among the best parish friendships I have ever known have been those established in these cases where a frank, true understanding has cleared the air and revealed a substantial foundation for a happy relationship.

Life, after all, is a looking-glass in that we get out of it what we put in. If we do not like others, they probably do not like us. Overcoming our oversensitiveness in such cases may overflow the heart with happiness.

The old fable of the Man and the Fog applies to some of our human contacts. A terrible figure was approaching him—a hideous, uncouth, mammoth-like form. Drawing nearer, it seemed less formidable; nearer still, it had the outline of a man; close at hand, the man was well groomed, with a happy face. Face to face the man and the figure from out the gloom greeted each other by name, for they were brothers.

If our motto in life is "Help the other man," the glooming mists of dislikes will fade away and we shall discover that many a supposed foe may prove to be a valued friend.

YOUNG MEN AND SUNDAY

ONE of the most striking facts in the biography of William E. Dodge relates to the Sunday question. From his earliest youth he observed the sabbath strictly and kept it up through his entire life. His biographer attributes much of his success to this and related characteristics. At one time in his early married life he and Mrs. Dodge reached an out-of-the-way southern junction point too late on Saturday night to make the connection for the through northbound train. They stayed in a little way station until Monday morning, where he spoke in the little church. It made a lasting impression upon that entire community.

But times have changed and customs as well. The practical age in which we live usually discounts or

ridicules such strict adherence. The lesson, however, remains, and the question may well be asked, "Are we making the most of Sunday? Are we spending Sunday as God intended?" The discussion, however, must not be broadened to the general question of sabbath observance. We would limit it here to the lonely youth away from home in a big city.

The young man or woman who has worked incessantly and faithfully through the six days of the week feels a great sense of relief on Saturday night, as well as on Sunday morning, in realizing that it is not necessary to pay attention to the irritating alarm clock. There is a chance to "catch up"; to rest up a tired body; to loosen the tension. And why not? This of all days is a day of rest—bodily rest, mental rest! True, in many instances, the well-fixed habit of church or Sunday school attendance checks up the conscience, but in countless instances no such thought is suggested.

Why not make the day a lazy day? Why dress? Why not just loaf—loaf with the mind as well as the body? It takes no mental energy to peruse a Sunday newspaper. The mind does not have to be alert. Modern illustrated editions demand a minimum of intellectual effort. No concentration is required. Any and every subject may be presented. That which catches the eye for the moment controls the mind. The paper is read superficially and thrown into the corner or crowded into the waste basket. Wholesome, thought-filled

books are untouched, and the Bible is not thought of.

In the afternoon a lazy walk is taken and then comes some form of entertainment or diversion—a movie, or perhaps a loafing, lolling call with some nearby fellowboarder. And then for Monday morning and another week's hard work.

Does this kind of program rest, develop or inspire youth in a wholesome way? Is this the meaning of rest? Does it satisfy? Does it energize? On the contrary, it lowers the standard of life, depletes the vitality and destroys ideals.

The one day in seven was never intended for such use. It was given as a day to awaken the mental and spiritual powers and to renew the life and body for the tasks ahead. Rest does not necessarily mean inertia, nor recuperation inactivity. A hammock vacation would be a terrible bore to most full-blooded, ambitious men. Change of employment in itself rests and energizes.

The flabby muscles of inactivity; the restless stupor of a low mentality; the characterless weariness of the lazy—these cannot substitute for real life, nor make men "healthy, wealthy or wise."

The things we think about really control us. The way we spend our leisure discloses the secret of our inner selves. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Tell me how a man spends his Sunday, and I will tell you what kind of man he really is.

It is not necessary to become dissipated in re-

ligious activity or church duties to make the most of one's Sunday. In fact, this extreme course sometimes injures the value of young lives. The church of Christ opens her door to the youth of our city. He who enters the door gains a blessing. He who enters into the life of a church receives spiritual development; his better, higher, deeper life becomes more sensitive to the things which are worth while. His vision is extended, his faith is vitalized, his hope revived, his mind cleared and his heart warmed. Proper companionships result in happy social affiliations.

A Sunday without any inspiration from God's Word is a Sunday poorly spent. Thousands of youth have received permanent inspiration and life blessing from the suggestions of God's house on Sunday.

Of course, it means effort—the overcoming of laziness, perhaps the breaking of lazy habits—but the effort brings its reward.

The old couplet which comes down from Puritan tradition is worth repeating:

"A sabbath well spent
Brings a week of content,
And strength for the joy of tomorrow.
But a sabbath profaned,
Whatsoever be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow."

Young man, use your sabbath. Do not let your sabbath misuse you.

ENJOYING VACATION

A VACATION that does not take one away from the anxieties and thoughts of regular work is not worthy of the name. The man or woman who can shut his door on his office work when he leaves it is the one who generally does the best work when he is in that office. So the vacation should close the door on home duties and get into an atmosphere new and invigorating. Worried faces and anxious looks have no right to accompany the seeker after rest and change. Better to stay at home than to take away with you the accumulated cares of the past. Forget them. Pack your grip with the determination that "Old things have passed away, that all things have now become new." If your neighbor begins to "talk shop" pretend you are sleepy and need a nap, or change the subject by interesting him in talking of his pet hobby. If necessary come out frankly and tell him you have left all that behind for a few weeks. Tell him your latest joke, even at the risk that he has heard it before; but whatever you do, change the step of your ordinary program.

One of the dangers of the summer convention and the summer school is that a tired brain and an overworked heart will have to do more overtime work instead of taking a little play. Of course they have their place and do an immense amount of good, but they are not so useful to the hard worked mind as they are to the hard worked body. Min-

ister and teachers are often the greatest sinners along this line. Feeling the need of advancing, and using the weeks of vacation to refill, they often tax an over-wrought mind to the limit, and return to work with a fagged brain rather than coming back to the old task with renewed vigor and alert response.

Of course the question of expense frequently comes into the matter. A man has to make both ends meet, and so he tries to make the vacation pay for itself, but this ought not so to be. If a church gives a minister a vacation he should realize that he has an obligation to his people to use that time for the purpose for which it is given. He is paid for resting, for playing, for recreating. He is not paid to supply other churches, nor fill outside appointments. Some will say that "it stimulates" to face new audiences and meet new surroundings. This may be true, but it is an excuse which is exaggerated, and often pride and ambition have something to do with it, if the truth were told.

Every faithful workman needs a time each year when he can really play. I have in mind a man who has played hard every summer vacation for 30 years and he is as young apparently today as he was 20 years ago, and he has kept his vigor, his scholarship and his health. I have in mind another who has frequently boasted that he "had preached every Sunday for 25 years," that he "rests that way," and he too seems to be vigorous and well. Nevertheless the latter is wrong in theory, and if

he has not and does not pay the price for it, others will who follow his poor example.

"All work and no play" DULLS and KILLS. This does not mean that a vacation means an easy chair, or a hotel veranda, or a hammock, but it does mean that a real change is a health promoter, and will give fine and valuable assets.

A man owes it to himself, to his children, to his friends, and to his constituency to PLAY HARD as well as to WORK HARD, and when the usual task is resumed there will be a freshness and a joy which can only come to those who are *recreated* in body, brain and soul.

A good novel or any good book will afford an unequalled incentive to vacation hours, and nothing inspires a Christian and renews faith more than the careful reading of the Psalms and the Scriptures in general when in the open and on vacation days. A preacher or teacher will invariably return to his work with much new material after the right outing, and his work will have new meaning and power.

ADAPTING EMBARRASSMENT

MOST people are placed in embarrassing circumstances at times and suffer relatively! Some whose natures are particularly sensitive suffer acutely. After all why not make the most of such experiences, and if possible turn the attention of storm-announcers to the rainbow caused by the sun.

Maltbie Davenport Babcock, upon entering a drawing-room was suddenly conscious that he was the only man without full-dress. He had supposed the party informal and had on a light plaid suit. Going up to his genial hostess, for every eye was upon him, he pleasantly asked her if she knew, "Why a dyspeptic wore a plaid suit?" Upon her merry negative, he said, "Just to keep a little check on his stomach." Every one entered into the joke, and every other man envied him in so far as men can envy a genius.

It is said that Chauncey Depew was once reluctantly persuaded to attend a formal London dinner and wear his business suit. His full-dress clothes had not arrived at his hotel. He was told he would not be noticed nor called upon to speak! But the inevitable of course happened, and he was called into publicity by the toastmaster and a speech demanded.

He began by saying he was sorry not to be in regimentals, especially at a London dinner, but he had tried at several tailors to hire a dress suit but was told that theirs were all out as a big dinner was going on that evening.

Even the Englishmen saw the joke and *The London Times* capped his opening sentences as the acme of wondrous humor.

Why not turn embarrassment into opportunity? Show up the rainbow or at least look for one when it rains. This world needs cheer and sunshine, and there should be no place for embarrassment and

confusion if the soul is happy and if conditions may be adjusted.

Mr. Moody's quick insight and action were the means of Dr. Grenfell's early conversion, according to popular report, because the young physician heard the great evangelist meet a long drawn-out prayer by saying "When our good brother has finished his prayer we will sing hymn No. 63."

The world and human life are filled with sore spots, and sadnesses, to say nothing of embarrassments, why not overcome them by ready wit and commonsense?

The Saviour turned a funeral procession into a resurrection scene just outside the little town of Nain. He arrested the attention of a sight-seeing selfish Zaccheus and made him a benevolent saint.

Christian courtesy and grasping a situation go together and the wise servant of Christ will better conditions rather than make them worse! To brighten society rather than add to its gloom! To make people feel comfortable amid embarrassing surroundings rather than add or call attention to distresses! Why not adapt embarrassments?

DRIVING WITH ONE LIGHT

STANDING on a corner early one evening recently waiting for a friend's car, I counted 14 cars pass which only had one of their two lights lighted. It seemed incredible but nevertheless was true. It set me to thinking. Traffic statistics tell us

that many accidents result from this carelessness, and anyone who drives, especially on a dark highway, knows the annoyance and bewilderment of one light on cars. Personally I once narrowly escaped a terrific crash with a huge truck simply because it had but one fore light and the driver was almost in the center of the road at that.

But there is more involved in our thought than the automobile. How many go through life partially lighted? The danger is not only one which faces others, but the one-light persons have their own safety and vision impaired. They see clearly but a part of the road before them, and cause others as well to misjudge.

For instance, there is the light of "self" and the light of "others." These should both give clear direction ahead. If one alone is lighted and "self" gleams out, others are not seen nor considered. On the other hand, if "others" shines and self is totally dark, disaster may result. These two should light the way together, so that self-interest and unselfish service may equalize and help one another. "Number one" can never realize life's full blessings until he lives to help "number 2" as well.

Again, "Justice" and "Mercy" should be lighted together. If one is bright and the other dark, injustice and bitterness result, and discipline and order become a joke. The old scriptural admonition, "To do justly, love mercy and walk humbly," can never be followed unless justice and mercy both are lighted and complement one another.

Still further, "Jest" and "Earnest" need each other's mutual light. How many serious and even worried lives would lose their wrinkles and nervous tension if mirth and humor could shine out along life's way! Many a man or woman grows old prematurely simply because the rays of fun and humor never shine. This leads us to another mutual relation in life, usually called "secular and religious."

Kingsley once said that the life which separated religious and secular was failing in both, and surely both should be lighted and shining together. Consistent living is the first essential testimony of a Christian life. Genuine piety can never cast a single light, for the religious light will ever gleam alongside of the light of character. Men see the "light of life" when beside it they see the life of light. A man's life lights or puts out his profession.

This last pair of lights leads us to the consideration of the old pair which the writer James so practically coupled, "faith and works." "Show me your faith without your works," he said, "and I will show you my faith by my works." He later added, "So faith without works is dead." In other words, if both be not lighted and working together, both go out. We will admit that one light is better than no light, but to light life's highway aright, both must shine. It is worth while in everything in life to be sure both lights are shining.

SINGING AS YOU GO

IT was a long, lonely night road up into the mountains and I was alone in my car. The motor hummed quietly along and occasionally round a curve or far ahead gleamed the blinding lights of an approaching traveller.

My friends had left me at the little town station to which I had driven them. Before I was aware of it I found myself singing quietly the old hymns. Suddenly a thrill came over me and I was again in the old home of boyhood, my father and mother and sisters all about. Miles after miles fairly flew past as the old familiar hymns sang themselves past my lips, "Rock of Ages," "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing," "He Leadeth Me," "I Need Thee Every Hour," "Jesus Saviour Pilot Me," "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning," "Sweet Peace, The Gift of God's Love," "Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me," "When Waves Are Raging O'er the Upper Ocean," "Beneath the Cross of Jesus," "When I Survey," and many more of those old choice blessed tunes!

Instead of a lonely trip it had been delightful! My soul and spirit were all aglow. I felt as I used to feel when swept by the inspiration of an old revival. And why not sing more as we go through life?

I recall years ago tramping through the deep woods in Northern New Hampshire, how one could lift his voice in song and praise.

The whole world sings. In travelling in the

Orient one is impressed in China, Japan, in Burma and the Philippines, by the singing and humming of the day laborers. Men unloading a boat-load of wood, men even carrying heavy burdens, lessen the monotony of their work and the load with their quiet, steady notes and words of song.

In a biography of the great inventor of the reaper, Cyrus H. McCormick, his biographer refers to his old home in Virginia where he was brought up as a boy and says, "On Sundays he listened earnestly to strong preaching in New Providence Church and sang with delight the great hymns of the ages, for he was ever a lover of music and ever a deeply religious nature. The words and melodies of those sweet old hymns remained with him throughout life, sang in his heart during all the stress of his stalwart years, and sustained and cheered him even down to the end."

A modern hymn gives the refrain:

"When the heart is gloomy
Sing some happy song,
Meet the world's repining
With a courage strong."

Why not sing it through? Why not use this means of grace to drive away loneliness and fear, and turn life's sadness into gladness, and renew faith and hope by the songs of the ages? Sing as you go.

REALITY OF THE SPIRITUAL

IN Prof. Chrisman's interesting book "John Ruskin Preacher" he refers to Carlyle as preaching "to upward-striving, light-seeking men and women the gospel of the *reality* of the spiritual," and adds "He called his generation to turn from the meat which perisheth to the eternal verities. To him the idea of an absentee God, and a mechanical universe was chilling and repulsive."

He refers to "Sartor Resartus" in quoting, "Fore-shadows, (Call them fore-splendors) of that Truth and Beginning of Truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than Dayspring to the ship-wrecked in Nova Zemble; Ah, like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel house with specters; but Godlike and my Father's."

We need more of this philosophy in our day. The author adds, "With our Sciences and our Cyclopedias, we are apt to forget the divineness in these laboratories of ours. We need to believe with sufficient intensity to translate into life."

Unconsciously men are apt to swing too far into a vague materialism, we need to know and feel the *reality of the spiritual.* This is appreciated more just now than it has been for many a day. Science is not seeking to emphasize nor defend the

materialistic side. On the contrary among the prominent scientists of today are outstanding leaders who are calling attention to spiritual values. Charles P. Steinmetz, recognized by the General Electric Company as perhaps the world's foremost electrical engineer in answer to the question "What line of research will see the greatest development in the near future?" is reported to have replied as follows:

"In my judgment the greatest discovery will be made along spiritual lines. Here is a force which history clearly teaches has been the greatest power in the development of men and history. Yet we have merely been playing with it, and have never seriously studied it as we have the physical forces. . . . Some day people will learn that material things do not bring happiness, and are of little use in making men and women creative and powerful. Then the scientists of the world will turn their laboratories over to the study of God's Word and Prayer, and the spiritual forces which as yet have scarcely been scratched. When this day comes the world will see more advancement in one generation than it has seen in the past four."

Coming from such a man, these words weigh heavily. Michael Pupin and Professor Milliken are other conspicuous figures on the scientific stage who emphasize spiritual realities.

The inspiring statement of scripture that "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him," is not a

sentiment to be used only at a funeral but on the street and in the active arena of life, and "the things" to which reference is made are not material but spiritual realities.

The religion of the day is filled with spiritual reality and is discounting much which the materialist of a generation ago over-valued.

Christ saw beyond the material but did not disregard it.

He said "I go to prepare a *place* for you," but that place in its *spiritual reality* was defined in terms of the material. So we, His followers, must see and speak with a deeper and more vital belief in the spiritual realities to be revealed.

DIGGING FROM THE MINES

MUCH interest has centered recently in John Bunyan and his immortal allegory, for we have just passed the three hundredth anniversary of the great dreamer's birth.

William Henry Harding in his interesting recent volume of Bunyan speaks of the "unfailing store of illustration," "the noble model of style" which he "dug from the mines" of the Bible.

He tells us "a tenacious memory enabled him to marshal passages swiftly; and a nimble wit taught him to use his perseveringly acquired knowledge with aptness and dexterity." We well know the mines from whence he dug.

This figure of speech appeals to every one who

is familiar with the Word of God, the Bible is not only a mine, but innumerable mines in which are stored the precious ore and gems of all ages past. It is a resource which will supply the need of infinite ages to come. Neither are explosives needed to mine these gems and ore. The solitary miner may stake his claim anywhere and begin work with his own pick and shovel. Neither are there any openings or shafts which are dead and exhausted, for strangely enough the more a vein has been worked the richer it yields. Those who dig are never disappointed but find these mines afford every kind of mineral and gem usable and known to man. Ores which are valuable in themselves, and ores which, mixed with material from other sources, will meet the requirement of all conditions of need; gems which stand out in solitary beauty or which will suit any setting or scintillate amid all other jewels.

Again, as one searches into the history of the past, the words and writings of those who have left their permanent impress upon the ages have mined these same sacred hills to find in this book their lasting values.

Art has found here her matchless conceptions and expressions; music her sweetest melodies and stirring symphonies; literature her strongest figures and sublimest truths; character her most vital relation and holiest virtues.

Here the scholar has found his university; the artisan his material; the poet his song.

Here age has rested his weary body, and youth has climbed to his mountain-top of vision. Here joy has found its song, and sorrow its consolation.

These mines have enriched the home, elevated the school, purified the mart, and glorified the altar.

They have framed the telling sentences of the orator and statesman, thrilled the audience of the singer, inspired the pen of the author, and softened the quiet lullaby of the loving mother with her restless babe.

The pulpit has become a throne of influence and might, increasingly forceful as men of God have mined deeper and deeper.

Great names adorn the hall of fame of these mines. From Stephen, Paul, Peter and the Master, Himself, on down through the century's generations these illustrious names multiply, Chrysostom, Augustine, Peter the Hermit, Savonarola, Luther, Malancthon, Calvin, Knox, Whitefield, Spurgeon, Brooks, Bushnell, Moody! Countless others have mined here to bring forth ore and gems which have lived and still live to beautify and brighten time and eternity.

These mines are still open and free to all who approach them with industry and faith, and never in human history has the demand for the content of this exhaustless mine been more needed than the present hour.

He who will mine today from these resources of God may find "Gold, silver and precious stones."

LIFE IN THE OPEN

VACATION days are largely days in the open. Of course there are books to read and naps to take, and all sorts of odd and extra duties, such as rooms to tidy up, verandas to sweep, dishes to wash and wood to haul. But these are only a part of the program and add to the fun, if one is not a drone. After all this life in the open is the true vacation life and puts into living the thrill and joy. Even rainy days are not so bad to one who loves the great outdoors. Whether it be the sea or the woods, plains or the mountains, it matters not. Whether it be tent or log cabin, shack or bungalow for a shelter, what is the difference; the great outdoors has an unrivalled attraction and we breathe more freely and value horizons and see sunsets with new eyes and happier hearts.

We all become artists under the spell of nature, and musicians with the tutelage of the birds, and botanists in the wide school of the wild flowers. To walk and climb and talk and sing, to whistle or shout at will, or to sit and dream and think and pray, just as one feels inclined with never a soul to dictate or suggest; to just rest or loaf or run at will. This is life in the open at its best, and ere we know it we are young again, and old cares and regular duties are forgotten.

How natural it is to fill the lungs and take deep breaths! How instinctive to flash the eye and see clearly. How unconsciously the step becomes alert

and gets its old spring again! All outdoors is ours and with it freedom and independence. We are the companions of Nature and in sympathy with all we see and hear. The only drawback is that we feel selfish and wish all those whom we love could be with us and could enjoy the fun too.

But alas this ideal state does not come so readily to all of us at first, for frequently the body and brain are too much worn out to jump right into the realization of our fortune, and little things are likely to annoy and disturb our pleasure until we become adjusted. We had anticipated so much and now we find the room is small, and the fellow-boarders are not attractive, and the food is not cooked as we like it. We anticipated rich cream for breakfast and this is no better than an ordinary restaurant affords at home. The porch is not nearly so wide as the photograph showed, and the trees are not nearly so numerous as we had supposed. Neighbors are nearer than ideal and that child next door plays the same old finger exercises early in the morning. Then, everyone wants to do another thing than that which we had planned, and no one can agree on the place of the picnic.

But let us wait a minute; stop and consider. All outdoors is ours. What do we care? Let us cheer up, and remember these are vacation days, and a good time does not depend after all on these little annoyances. Let us forget them and make up our minds we will live above them and outside of them.

Why lose the beauty of the sunset because our glasses are dirty? Why not tie a raincoat to our saddle in case of rain? Why not read a novel if we cannot fish a stream? Why not start the radio, or turn on the victrola if that child persists in her finger exercises? Why not take "lame auntie" for a walk if the crowd has gone off and left us and we feel as if life wasn't worth the living? (True, it may be hard on "Auntie.") If our fingers are sore and we cannot finish that piece of fancy work, why not read or jump rope or listen to the bird and sit without activity for a while.

All outdoors is ours, and nothing to do. The chance is unrivalled if one uses his head. We are not all nature students and perhaps some of us are not ambitious along that line but every human soul may enjoy the nature all about him and find a strange and fascinating happiness in the beauty which is the common gift of a divine Creator. We may all learn from our Master love for the natural and the ever present works of God which are all about us.

COLLECTING

NOT so long ago, in speeding east on one of the fast trains of the Pennsylvania road, we passed through a small town near which were two large fields completely filled with old automobiles. There must have been several hundred machines in each field, and near by there were great piles of all kinds of automobile scrap and junk. There did not

seem to be more than a small workshop in connection with these vast collections.

An acquaintance who sat near me said, as we passed, "What a queer mania."

I replied, "Yes, a necessary one. I often wonder where people can get rid of cars that are past their usefulness and value."

The practicability of such a business no doubt depends somewhat upon the industry and ability of the owner, and though it would not appeal to many people, to others there would be a very definite attraction. This is largely a matter of temperament, and the collecting instinct is to be found everywhere.

Just why one should want to deal in old automobiles, scrapping the undesirable parts in the junk heap and retaining those which can be marketed, we cannot understand, but some temperaments work that way.

The mania for collecting is not only temperamental; in some cases it is local and even natural. In certain sections of America the descendants from some European nations are so intent upon their collections of various things that a man's reputation is largely based thereon. It is not how much a man is worth or how much a man may know, but who has the finest collection of curios. Entire houses are largely built with this in view and in every room, cabinet and shelf are interesting curios from all parts of the world. We well remember that as a boy we had this instinct in a very

controlling measure. Postage stamps, coins, shells, minerals, and as we grew older it may have found its expression in books, art and music.

There is no question that a man is more capable in his definite task if he has an avocation as well as a vocation—a hobby as well as a business—and the whole art of collecting is associated with this frame of mind.

But is it not worth while to stop and consider, before this fascinating and fevered condition controls, just what we are to collect and the relative value (both subjective and objective) of the things which we collect?

To return to our first figure, one may be a salesman of new cars, or a dealer in serviceable second-hand cars. But who really wants to be a collector of old junk, wants to transform his home, his buildings and his fields into a storage abode for worthless and completely worn-out material?

The field of old automobiles suggested a mechanical cemetery. There were bones there which might possibly be used; but the junk heap almost had an odor about it in its suggestion of decay and destruction.

It is worth while to consider the value of the selective quality in that which we are accumulating.

This applies to our mental as well as to our physical life; to our spiritual values as well as to our material ones. With what are we filling our minds—the open fields of our brain cells? With

what are we filling the spaces of spiritual expanse in our very natures? What are we reading? Whom are we meeting? Who are our friends? Where are our thoughts when we are alone? Is the inspiring, the useful, the helpful filling our lives and our collecting instincts; or, are we the recipients of the worthless, the worn-out, the junk of life? There is an immense amount of it aboard, and many people do not know what to do with their old wasted and worthless goods. They are tired of their hobbies.

One automobile in good working condition is worth a field of such truck.

There is still another side, however, an essential consideration which should not be omitted. There is some good material in the old and seemingly worthless heap.

There are those who are willing to help, and when this thought applies to human nature, we have much reason for spending our time with the souls of those whose bodies have suffered in life's journey.

The Master came "to seek and to save that which was lost." The Jerry McAuley mission, the Pacific Garden mission, the rescue workers all over the world are saving many a wreck thrown upon life's scrapheap—wrecks which have immortal souls.

It is worth while to spend our time and money to save the lost. "Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him."

THE POWER OF APPEAL

WAITING one day for a friend outside a public building, I noticed a sign on the adjacent lawn, "Keep off this lawn." Footprints were visible and were not visible elsewhere on the lawn nearby. This led to the natural inquiry, why had youth crossed in the particular spot where the sign was placed, and only there? Instinctively the reason was obvious. The man who placed the order had disregarded a natural tendency in human nature. Had he put on his sign the prefix "Please," there would have been no trouble.

"Keep off" was an offensive command. "Please keep off" would have appealed, and been respected. The sign-placer had made an error in judgment. He had overlooked a human characteristic.

Demand is not so effective as request. This may be contrary to martial discipline, and the absolutism of law, but life is not an army camp and human beings are not inclined to obey unknown and self-assertive commanders. A bit of courtesy is akin to wisdom. The heart responds to a smile but resents arbitrary sternness.

The frown may compel the coward to obey, but willing obedience is won best by pleasant suggestions. The "Don'ts" of surly commanders may force acquiescence, but will not win loyalty and good-will.

The prefix "Please" disarms the unruly, and awakens favorable desire to act in accord with the

wishes of another. Discipline need not be acquired by discourtesy, but may easily be gained through respect. "Did I not tell you to go out quietly?" stormed an angry teacher to a class of lively boys as they noisily left the classroom. They always went out of her room that way.

That same class was considered the most orderly class in school by another gentler teacher, who had occasionally dismissed them with the remark, "Boys, may I ask you to leave quietly, that the other classes may not be disturbed." The first was always in trouble, the second never.

"I have not called you servants but I have called you friends," said the wisest of Teachers, and men who know Him have ever felt this force of His personality, and have learned to love His commands.

A thoughtless, selfish world needs to see and hear the "please" preface if glad response is to be gained. The roughest backwoods railway station I ever knew was encouraged in its vile and profane talk by a huge sign, never read or observed, "No swearing in here." The whole place was reformed by a new road superintendent, who took it down, and put up in its place a substitute which read, "May we ask you not to swear?"

An angry lumberman wanted to fight when a cross stranger called him for swearing. The same man apologized when a gentleman asked if he knew that the One whose name he had just used was a friend of his, but the latter said it with a genuine manner, and without public notice.

"Step lively," shouted an irritated street car conductor with his hand on the bell strap. He had many an angry look and no one moved faster. A kind request would have softened his tone and hastened his passengers' steps.

Human nature dislikes to receive orders, especially from unknown dictators, but it responds quickly to the pleasant request of courteous words.

It has been said that General Lee was "an intrepid leader, but always a gentleman."

We read, "A soft answer turneth away wrath," but it is also true that a kind request wins favor. Law and love must go together, for law without love courts disobedience, but law *with* love controls.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR BRAIN

EVERY one aims to take care of his body, at least, this is the most natural care we have. If one is feeling out of order or out of sorts, our friends are solicitous, and we hear the courteous remark: "I hope you are feeling better today." To feel well is the wish and purpose of all. How seldom we think of our brain! Of course the brain is a very vital part of the body. And if we are afflicted with a brainstorm attention is quickly demanded by our acquaintances if not by us.

Our thought, however, is not so much in regard to an abnormal condition, but as to the care and attention given under normal circumstances.

As sensible people we are very particular as to

the food that goes into our stomachs! Why then are we so careless and disinterested with reference to the sustenance of our minds?

The average man never looks at a mind-menu. A headline in the paper, or a highly illuminated billboard, no matter how sensational or false in representation, sets to working a whole line of foolish and worthless energies. These and countless other mental excitements are allowed to have effect. The real values of thought are quickly forgotten, and fevered. If "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," he finds even more for idle minds.

The empty mind craves food and in its eagerness accepts anything that comes its way.

Compare with such a mind that of the man who chooses what he reads, guards his thoughts and cherishes his moments. It is not enough that he can read. He is keenly interested in what it is that he reads. His selective qualities are not confined to his sense perceptions but include his mental choices. The talk-habit is not engendered. His friends are not bored and restless in his company, for when he speaks he usually says something.

"She talks so easily and says so little," was the passing remark as a radiantly clothed guest left the drawing room. Well, why shouldn't she? How could she do otherwise? Rippling water doesn't turn machinery, even if silvery waterfalls are necessary to beautify scenery. If she had a strong current in her conversational stream, it might have power and influence, and that might offend. Her

mind was fed up on mere intellectual scenery and her conversation had only a scenic effect.

"As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." But if he doesn't think at all, just what is he?

Surely the mind is worth taking care of. Some one has recently said: "Thought is the lightning of the soul." We are deeply interested when it comes to selecting the right school or teachers for our children. Should we forget that we ourselves never escape from life's schoolroom?

All about us are to be found books, papers, magazines, pictures, music, men, women, children; and all can give us incentives to the highest type of thinking.

One of the finest tributes paid to Robertson Nicoll was: "He made every one think who read him." Recently a friend wrote from San Francisco: "I have taken up again going regularly to church. Life now means more to me and our minister is helping me think straight and strong." Such a church or preacher is a power in any city or community because there is an influence on the individual.

Our minds have been wandering Arabs too long. We cannot live in the desert; we are in the city and town, and the problems of human society which we must help to meet need the best brain as well as best brawn in the world.

Mental exercise, like the finger exercises on the piano, trains for future composition and gives the touch of grace and skill.

"What a fine face that man at the head of the table has!" "Yes," was his companion's reply, "but I sat next to him a whole evening recently and the only remarks he made were a criticism on the soup and a denunciation of all foreigners."

Mental power generally asserts itself in features as well as in word. This man may have had the brain power but it had been improperly trained and directed.

Train the brain, or an uncontrolled mind will lead to all the ills that a lazy or perverted intellect can so easily acquire.

The Saviour was always One whose mind was alert. He sat to preach or counsel. He made table-talk notable by His wisdom and thoughtful companionability. "In Him was life and the life was the light of men."

St. Paul brought "every thought into subjection," hence he could say, "for me to live is Christ."

Is it not worth while with steadfastness to fix our vision, on the things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report; virtuous and praiseworthy?

WHY JOIN THE CHURCH?

STATISTICS are sometimes dangerous matters and not always reliable, for the conditions and facts which lie back of them are not always known. The writer blended humor with common sense when he stated that there were three kinds of lies, "white

lies, black lies and statistics." Nevertheless, it is true that accurate investigation shows that a large number of those who unite with the church and confess Christ do so early in life, a large percentage taking a stand before they are 18. This is not quite so true in recent years as it was formerly, and many of our young people are postponing this important action upon the grounds of deliberation and further investigation.

We would not for a moment suggest that the step should be taken thoughtlessly or through mere impulse, but it is certainly wise for parents to weigh the value of their own influence in this matter. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," applies not only to matters of character but also to membership in the Christian church.

The varied diversions of human life, together with the exacting control of more mature problems affect youth necessarily as age comes on.

If a child is established in the church, he is more likely to continue his individual and active relationship thereto than if he defers personal association and identity in membership.

One reason why parents are not more vitally interested in this important step with their children is due to the fact that the parents themselves have lost that vital interest, and hence do not value its importance and its influence upon future life and character.

Letters come to us from varied parts of the

country suggesting the need of this very consideration. Pastors write that fathers and mothers seem indifferent in their responsibility to their children in getting and inspiring them to take this step.

If parents are not themselves actively interested in the church; if they have allowed letters to remain unopened in bureau drawers or trunks, there is little probability that their children will be influenced to enter into a relationship which their parents do not value.

Many reasons in the complex life of today tend to minimize the importance of church membership. Many are not sure that they are to remain in their present position. They are waiting until they are established and certain of their future. Meanwhile, children grow up rapidly, and soon become independent in their thinking and action, and the influence of the home is largely gone.

To take a firm and clear stand for Christ and to unite with the church where one is located has the advantage of example as well as inspiration.

It is also wise for fathers and mothers to talk this matter over with their children in a practical way, urging upon them the necessity of immediate relationship. A few quiet moments thus spent will influence boys and girls and give to them a sense of personal responsibility.

Parents often use the argument that their children are too young, and do not realize just what they are doing. They suggest their waiting until they can think the whole subject through them-

selves, and come to their own full intellectual conclusion. Although this suggestion has an apparent degree of wisdom, it also has its danger.

The thought, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," is one to be considered. Where emotional appeal may be emphasized excessively, it has its very definite place in the conversion of the soul. The head follows the heart, but the heart seldom follows the head primarily. We love not from treatises on method, but from the spontaneity of the heart. No one ever fell in love by a book of etiquette or suggested method of procedure. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" leads to strong and constructive thinking.

Emotion has a place in our religion. Our children do not love us merely because they obey us, but they obey us because they love us. Duty receives a greater emphasis under the stress of affection. The strong initial emotions of the soul are alert and sympathetic as childhood matures into youth. Then the church must bind its youth to herself.

The Christian pastor must have the constant support and ready coöperation of parents, if he is to reinforce church membership with the quick growing youth of our land. We must take this to heart and work together for our boys and girls. The future of the church is insured with such reinforcement and cannot be insured otherwise.

CONTROLLING ONE'S TEMPER

LOSING one's temper is undoubtedly a sin. And it is usually a very senseless sin, for the adage is beyond the legal profession that "he who loses his temper loses his case."

There are probably many occasions for "righteous indignation," but the use of that phrase has not equaled its abuse. Wise persons do not delude themselves with that subterfuge when they have yielded to weak anger.

This sin of angry speech and action is the result frequently of a surcharged and hasty temperament, unrestrained by discipline. It is none the less harmful and far-reaching because it is not meant to be so. Those who allow themselves this indulgence may be misunderstood and misjudged, and when sailing on an even sea or with a steady breeze are delightful associates. Impetuosity and impulse control however, when contrary winds assail, and a moment's "letting loose" may cause unmeasured and long-lasting unpleasantness.

After all, what a senseless performance it all is! The low tones of the man who has himself under control win mastery in argument and hold confidence. A smiling speaker can utter strong words and the utterance holds the listener and awakes the indifferent.

"I thought I was talking with a gentleman," said an irate individual as he fell before the calm eloquence of his companion in speech. "You are," was

the quiet reply, "and I want you to preserve my like opinion."

A laugh checked the flash of offensive sarcasm and they continued happily.

It is true that it takes two to make a quarrel, and many a combat is diverted by composure and self-control.

Anger, like gunpowder, has its place, but not where matches are being lighted. Electric lights will do better; and they always have bulbs about the live wire.

"If we could only get Harry mad," said an opposing football captain, "we could have a better show with his team."

Harry was a whirlwind; always alert with eye and limb, sure and aggressive in offensive and defensive play, always watching every man as well as his own man but never rattled. His "Steady, boys," worked like magic on his men and ruffled their opponents.

He knew the game and he knew life as well. If they piled off him at the bottom of a scrimmage, a smiling face was sure to be seen, even if it were tensed and bleeding. He was back in the line in a flash with his low, "Steady, boys." No wonder they won the championship. Not his nerve, skill, speed, daring, so much as his self-possession turned the trick. The world learns to follow and respect the man who controls his temper.

But how about the irritating affairs of the commonplace life, the petty trials of home? Who

wouldn't get mad when Nellie leaves the bureau drawer open and you nearly make an open wound in your knee—to say nothing of breaking all the china you are carrying—by colliding with the drawer? How many times have you, her mother, told her about such carelessness! What a heedless girl she is, anyway! Will she ever learn? Will she ever try to learn? She deserves severe punishment.

Well, give it to her, then; but do it calmly and squarely, without anger or over-wrought impulse. If you do she will probably close bureau drawers in the future. If you get angry and scold, fume and condemn, and then make up for your weakness by buying her candy and telling her you yourself did wrong, she will probably leave bureau drawers open whenever she feels like doing so.

Another consideration may be that possibly she has become accustomed to such carelessness by example. We never get quite so angry with others as when we realize inwardly that they are doing what we have always done. Half the unholy anger of parents which is leveled at the child is really anger at ourselves, and we take out on them what we feel toward ourselves, although it is unadmitted.

Fair, sane but decisive punishment is the best kind of discipline and will not spoil the child (nor the parent); less severe punishment, if carried out with angry, bitter words, will. The former corrects; the latter makes children want to leave home.

Boys will always be boys. They won't wear rubbers if they can escape; mud will cling to shoes and track the floor. They are reluctant to use water and soap if dirty hands are not detected. They are likely to forget to "practice" or to brush teeth unless kind words with authority help them to frame the habit.

Anger and hasty, unkind words do not aid much in creating good habits. Home becomes a nagging affair instead of a training school. Mothers get nervous prostration and fathers dine at the club.

One day twenty years ago we were playing indoor baseball at a mountain summer resort—fathers, mothers, boys, hired man and all. The 10-year-old son of a friend was at bat. His father was one of this country's great men. The boy was petulant, bossy, unsportsmanlike. No one pitched to suit him, the bat was "no good," he was making excuses for his own lack of skill by blaming everything and everybody in general. How I wanted to denounce him and turn him over my knee!

His father was catching behind the bat. In a low tone he calmed and steadied the youngster, and encouraged him till he made a hit. Later he had a serious talk with him. The boy steadily improved. Today he is controlled, worth while, useful; and starting in with his own child in his father's way. What if his father had done as I felt like doing—and as perhaps he also was inclined? How would the boy have turned out?

Self-control very often begins with the tongue.

"Steady!" is a good motto. The one who gets mad may force his way to some success, but he fails to gain respect due the man who can master himself. Men soon class the anger-swayed man as one who rules not his own spirit, and who never will "take cities."

DOES PRAYER COUNT?

CAN a man in the ordinary ranks of life pray effectively? Will prayer help to supply the actual needs of life this day? Will it pay rent? Will it get positions? Will it help in training children? Will it overcome immediate temptation? Will it strengthen character? Will it pay debts? Will it build homes? Will it heal sickness? Will it free from worry? Will it help one pass an examination? Will it protect one in moments of danger? Will it settle strikes? These are questions that are asked.

Should we seek the reply to these questions from those who pray or from those who do not pray? From those who believe and practice prayer, or from those who do not believe and know not the experience of prayer?

The actual value and power of prayer are questioned not by men and women who pray, but by the inexperienced. Testimony to the worth of prayer must come from praying people. And where has there ever been a man or woman who knows God in prayer who does not testify as to its worth?

We do not learn how to pray unless we pray, any more than a child can learn how to swim without going into the water.

Prayer begets prayer. The more we pray, the more we know how to pray; the more worth while prayer becomes.

Prayer is not confined to forms of worship, nor necessarily to the bended knee. We may pray as we walk; we may pray with open eyes, facing some difficult situation, or with eyes reverently closed while in a place of worship. David prayed as he ran to meet Goliath just as much as Samuel prayed in the still watches of the night.

The world's estimate of prayer value does not take into account the wisdom of the divine mind, or His right to answer many of our petitions negatively. Prayer that does not bring that which is requested is usually considered worthless. Neither is the necessity for patience appreciated. Restless and eager for an immediate reply, the petitioner who has the world's idea of prayer concludes that his prayer is without value, if he has to wait.

Prayer goes far deeper than any superficial human definition. Prayer includes the attitude of worship, the recognition of Deity, and has with it the inspiring value of bowing before the Eternal. This implies submission to the will of God and a genuine desire to know the divine will. There need be none the less importunity in prayer nor emphasis in our intercession if we supplicate in the true spirit of Christ, "Not my will but thine be done."

Who are the authorities of life? Do we seek the wisdom of the ignorant and inexperienced, or of those who are informed and participate? Much of the misunderstanding and error of today is occasioned by heeding the words of those who know nothing of the subjects which they discuss.

Why should a man who never prays believe in prayer? Why should a man who has no confidence in God and no vital belief take any real interest in prayer? Why should we heed his words about prayer? Do we seek a man's counsel in chemistry who has never entered a laboratory? Do we consult those who have never studied medicine when our children are ill? Do we ask men to translate for us a foreign language who know nothing of scholarship and have never seen a lexicon?

Our whole question will be answered if instead of questioning the power of prayer, we begin to pray. To take time to pray is to fit one's self not only for the tasks of the day but for the developments of the future.

If you want to know whether prayer is worthwhile, begin seriously, devotedly and faithfully to talk with God about the problems which are yours. Back them up with a personal, definite effort to coöperate with God in his answer, and there will be no longer in your mind a question mark as to the value and worth of prayer.

PLANNING AHEAD

AMONG many classes of people there are those who plan and figure ahead. This quality does not appeal to all; in fact, there are those who care little for it and simply live from day to day, hour to hour, hand to mouth. They are never interested in matters which pertain to the future, whether secular or religious. They are not interested in life insurance any more than they are interested in heaven.

They never think of the years before them, nor plan for the proverbial "rainy day." "What's the use?" "Take it as it comes!" are frequent expressions, if they refer to the subject at all, and if they should quote Scripture they would say, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," or, "We know not what a day may bring forth." Then they would probably add, "One day's evil is enough. Who cares what tomorrow is going to bring forth?"

They belong to the reckless and careless class. Indifference makes up their natural atmosphere. They are the penny-wise, pound-foolish kind. It is not so much with them "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush" as that "a mouthful of sweets is worth a meal of more nourishing food," or "never mind the law so long as I get a drink today." They are visionless and planless souls and the future with them has to take care of itself. They have never seen a savings bank book in their lives, to say nothing of a check book. They never

live on credit for they have none—happily for those who might be their creditors.

On the other hand, there is a thrifty, thoughtful, saving type who plan ahead. Tomorrow has a very real place in their calendar, hence today is more valuable. They have not heard forebodings, neither are they thinking continually of the "rainy day," but they do plan for the future. A year's study gives them the anticipation of a better preparation for life and its work. They know the meaning of self-denial that they may have the joy of possession.

In their self-forgetfulness they frequently think of others and know that thrift and thoughtfulness will mean an ability to help others. They do not despise the squirrel that labors in the summer for its winter store, but follow its example by living within their means and making regular deposits in the savings bank as well as meeting promptly their life insurance policies. They are neither the borrowers nor the lenders of life but are those who preserve that they may be able to meet the day of emergency. They plan ahead not only as to financial matters but in the mind and with the heart.

They plan that the mind may be stimulated, strengthened and developed; that artistic values shall be appraised and appreciated. They make friends with a view to permanency and worthiness. They study schools with the thought of the future of their children. They attend church because they appreciate that the kingdom of heaven is among us.

They realize that today is the future in disguise and that tomorrow lives in today. Plan, purpose, prayer, peace and power go together in their lives and they make up the worthwhile members of society.

Life without plan and purpose means haphazard living, and those who thus live become usually members of society who are dependent on others.

JOY IN THE ORDINARY

THE restlessness of human nature is such that most of us are constantly looking for the extraordinary in our pursuit of happiness. The regularity of our prescribed duties comes to seem monotonous. We unconsciously lose the zest of living and consider the ordinary tasks of life irksome rather than pleasurable. This is a state of mind we accept as final and go on with the necessary duties in a sort of humdrum indifference which robs us of any sense of satisfaction or joy.

This is not according to the high standard of nature. The cock crows constantly amid his continued supervision of the barnyard. The lark sings all through the day in sun and rain. The shepherd dog wags his tail as he runs hither and thither after the wandering herd. Work and fun go together in the accustomed tasks to which nature is trained. The man who cannot be happy when he is going about his responsible work will seldom find happiness when out of harness. If he does it will be

shortlived and fleeting. Life is what we make it, and the man who is never happy unless the special and extraordinary is taking place will not, in all probability, enjoy the anticipated "special." A vacation fails in its purpose if the day-to-day work of the year has not called forth faithful service. The man who cannot whistle in his ordinary task seldom whistles when he has nothing to do.

The best gifts of God are free and commonplace gifts open to all. Sunshine, fresh air, sleep, food, exercise, companionship, work, are ours for the taking, and require no special effort to enjoy. Health is the greatest of them all and results from the appropriation of the other gifts.

Envy is one of the subtlest foes of happiness and leads to a condition of jealousy before we are conscious of its presence. Hence it is natural for us to think the task of another better than our own, failing to realize that the very task we judge delightful is thought distasteful to the other man and that he envies us.

To face cheerfully and eagerly the accustomed and ordinary tasks of life is the simple but sure prescription for enjoyment of life. Poor workmen will always blame their tools, and poor fishermen will ever talk about the fine fishing on the next stream, but the workman or fisherman who smiles on and works faithfully right where he is will get results if he is a workman and will be happy if he doesn't catch fish. Restlessness, generally a sign of shiftlessness or laziness, is the companion of dis-

satisfaction and unhappiness, and frequently suggests mental or physical ill health.

This old world is a place in which regular and constantly repeated duty makes advance. Contentment oils the machinery and keeps out the squeak and rattle. Machinery is worth while which works noiselessly. When we sleep, as well as when we sit at ease on deck, the ceaseless engine does its regular work and the ocean is crossed. Thirty miles an hour, hour after hour, makes the automobile valuable and pleasurable. "All work and no play" is no more sensible than all work without play. "Enjoy life as you work" is the secret of happiness.

Of course many things are bound to be unpleasant and many people seem to insist on being disagreeable, but these are the bunkers on the course, and what credit is it to play a course without bunkers?

All men are sure to have such hazards every day, if not every hour, but these make life's course interesting to the player who is out for fun instead of out for a score. Mastering conditions means victory and joy, and the chance to do this is in the way of every true man and woman. To sum the whole matter up, if we are to have happiness in this world we must take it with us in our regular daily tasks.

FOUNDATIONS

AS I write the steady blows of a gigantic pile-driver are sounding in my ears. In fact, all about us in modern cities built on earth and sand-

soil rapid growth and change of structure make this sound a familiar one. It means foundations—the creation of a secure foundation where a solid base does not exist. A large amount of work is done and much money is expended for operations beneath the surface of our modern structures that they may be safe and permanent. When these buildings begin to rear themselves up toward the heavens one knows that the engineer has made sure of his base, the unseen foundation beneath the eye of man.

In contrast one calls to mind the buildings and temples on the banks of the river Ganges in India, in the old sacred city of Benares. As one moves along slowly in one of those clumsy river boats, pushed with ceaseless toil by the swarthy boatmen, everywhere fallen and crumbling temples are seen, one temple built upon the ruins of another. The existing structure seems almost tottering—not so much from its own condition, but from its environment. It is built literally upon the fallen ruins of another temple; beneath that crumbling, ruined structure one sees still another, and frequently the remnants of a fourth sunk into the sand on the river bank, decrepit and ruined in the onrush of countless generations.

The whole surroundings prompt the thought of decadence, decay and a forlorn hope, and why? Largely because there is no foundation, no preparation for the future in the undergrading of the new structure. Built upon a crumbling and wasted

foundation, the present building is doomed to fall and fall hopelessly. Such also seems the hopelessness of their faith, built upon a crumbling past, with no hope of a future.

Some of the old Christian hymns come to our minds in this connection:

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!"

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness."

The whole spirit of Christianity is the spirit of permanence, and has a condition of sure foundation and a strength which remains.

This principle of foundation is needed not only in the modern building, but even more in the structure of our modern thinking and all Christian philosophy. Paul said: "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him." The Scriptures also tell us, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." We also have the truth of "the building fitly framed together, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." The unseen, sure foundation of the soul is needed preëminently today in the changing conditions which are all about us.

The constant trip-hammer sound of the pile-driver not only speaks of progress and future building, but it insures the stability and permanence and

surety of that which is to be erected. Quick, rapid growth of the church of Christ is not necessarily of greatest value. Decades passed in China without converts, but so sure and faithful were the servants of those early pioneers that later missionaries have reaped the reward, for "others have labored and we have entered into their labor." That work was sure and steadfast.

The whole educational system of today is based upon this living truth. The men and women of tomorrow are the boys and girls of today. The training which they receive now is the underpinning, the foundation, the assurance of the future structure, the element of strength in the character of the coming days, that the time, patience, money, things expended will return a hundred fold if used aright. Men or women will not fall into inconsistencies and wrongs if they have been trained aright in childhood's plastic days. "The foundation of God standeth sure." "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Unseen by the passer-by on life's highway are the foundations which make the buildings of life sure, but more necessary than upper architecture or inner furniture is the foundation which makes all future development stable and secure.

In these days of rapid growth and enthusiastic vision let us never forget the world-old truth that the foundation must be sure or the structure will not be safe.

THE PLACE OF LEAST RESISTANCE

"WHAT was the matter with young 'Blank,' the new minister out at 'Blankville'?" asked my friend, a sturdy practical Christian business man. He continued, "I thought he was going to make a fine success in that rather difficult field; the people liked him and were rallying around him, when suddenly I learned that out of a clear sky, he had resigned, and left them. They don't understand it, and are discouraged and disheartened." I didn't reply directly to my friend, for I did not feel it necessary, but if I had told him frankly the reason I would have had to say, "The young man resigned because his job was too hard for his easy-going habits, his line-of-least-resistance life. He does not know what it means to endure hardness, as a good soldier."

A recent writer to youth put the thought tersely, "you don't like to undertake the hard and puzzling, do you? This has been a fault and drawback all your life, hasn't it? If you must concentrate to accomplish, you avoid the problem. Rather than get down to hard study, you willingly drift. You fail because you try to make your life one of ease and freedom from difficult tasks."

Yes, a weak life is always looking for easy tasks, and a weak Christian prays ineffectually for easy tasks but he is and ever will be a failure, a disappointment, and will probably die a presumer if not a paralytic.

Least resistance seekers are bound to become dead weights on their people and burdens to society. They are the drones of human life. They are not even so valuable as worthless books, for the latter can be used to hold up good books on the shelves. Such lives lose what little strength and color they have and become as unsightly and useless as punctured or worn-out tires.

Compare the life cited in our opening illustration with another. A young theological student about to graduate from one of our seminaries, was told of a hard problematical field in the West which had been thrown over as "impossible," by two men within the last five years. He asked for a chance to go there. The synodical missionary answered him, "No, we don't want to fool with any more new young men. It is too hard a field for you fellows and the salary is too small to satisfy you."

The theological student asked advice of no one but wrote back, "I want that field and will come without naming any salary if you will give me the chance. I'd like to be check-mated by that crowd if they can play the game."

He went. In two years he built a new church. In four he was given one of the hardest, but most promising fields in his synod. He is now a leader wherever he goes. He is looking for the lines and fields of *Hardest Resistance,* not the *Least.* He has the moral muscle, and never knew what flabby flesh was. He embodies a word of courage which Roosevelt used to love to use, and used effectively.

The age and the church of Christ just now must have men who love to face hard problems, and glory in them; men who despise easy chairs and smoking-jackets; men who remove the sofas out of their studies, and read, think, call, pray, preach and study with strength and what our fathers called "unction"; men who grapple with seen and unseen forces; men who wrestle against *more* than flesh and blood; men who are willing "to wrestle against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Such men despise the life that seeks the job and place of "Least Resistance."

THE EPIDEMIC OF RESTLESSNESS

WE do well to consider the age's growing tendency of restlessness, which has become almost a universal epidemic. Undoubtedly the undermining and demoralizing conditions resulting from the confusion and chaos of warfare had much to do with spreading this disease; but it is time to call a halt and to arrest the devastating injury of this far-reaching tendency.

The trouble is difficult to define. It is not so much a condition, as it is an attitude. It is more a state of mind than anything else. It is in the air with all types and kinds of people.

Every one seems to want to be on the go. "What are you going to do next?" or "Where do we go from here?" are universal questions. Movement, activity, motion, in other words, restlessness.

Reading seems to have lost much of its charm. Quiet conversation is almost unheard of. This restlessness seems even to speed up the very motion of people's lives. They are not satisfied with ordinary rates of speed. It seems they get a thrill out of breaking life's speed limits. Men put up a "Safety First" sign and then forget what it means and disregard it generally.

Irritability, peevishness, dislike and discourtesy result from this same condition. Men grow thoughtless of others as they become increasingly selfish and self-centered. Even the drama and stage feel the influence of this restless condition and thought-promoting plays of the masters, even Shakespearean plays, are produced infrequently.

The movies are quick, rapid and continuous, everchanging. Places of amusement which advertise changed scenery every night seem popular. The novel, the strange, the unexperienced seem to give the inexperienced added interest and awaken new sensation.

The influence of this same spirit is felt in domestic life. Instead of realizing and emphasizing the holiness of marriage-vows divorce courts seek to solve the problem. Friendship is losing something of its definition, and in its place is substituted quick companionship which is merely incidental and a matter of acquaintance.

There is a request to shorten lectures, shorten sermons and shorten times of thoughtfulness and quiet. Rest periods are given over to times of stimu-

lation; hence the growth in use of drug and narcotic substitutes for quietness and rest.

Restlessness must be considered not only a disease, the encouragement of it must be felt as a sin—a sin against nature, a sin against mind, a sin against heart and a sin against that poise of life which gives discretion, wisdom and judgment.

We must regain in our homes, our churches and our individual lives a sense of poise and quietness and preach again from that text, "In quietness and in confidence possess ye your souls." Yet another translation of that remarkable verse gives us the interpretation, "In quietness and in confidence ye shall win your lives."

We sing too infrequently that beautiful hymn by Harriet Beecher Stowe:

"When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,
And billows wild contend with angry roar,
'Tis said, far down, beneath the wild commotion,
That peaceful stillness reigneth evermore.

"Far, far beneath the noise of tempests dieth,
And silver waves chime ever peacefully,
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er it flieth,
Disturbs the Sabbath of that deeper sea.

"So to the heart that knows thy love, O Purest,
There is a temple, sacred evermore;
And all the babble of life's angry voices
Dies in hushed stillness at its peaceful door.

"Far, far away the roar of passion dieth,
And loving thoughts rise kind and peacefully,
And no rude storm, how fierce soe'er it flieth,
Disturbs the soul that dwells, O Lord, in Thee."

LACKING THE PUNCH

A FEW weeks ago a letter came from a young man once a member of our men's club, but now working in an eastern city. The letter centered in the question—Why do some men get ahead and others fail? He wrote with a slight touch of discouragement showing itself between the lines. Apparently he was not getting on as he had hoped. The letter had a streak of bitterness in it, and although the words "ill luck" and the expression, "never had a chance" were not used, one could easily perceive that they were implied. The letter recalled to memory our earlier experience with this young man.

He had come to us years before. He was well-born, strongly recommended, attractive, always well-groomed, polite, even winsome in his manner, clean in habit, discriminating in his companions and altogether a desirable youth; but he lacked a disposition toward industry. As we recall him, this characteristic was seen throughout the entire habit of his life. He was never prompt; could not be definitely depended upon to meet appointments; was easygoing in whatever he undertook; was easily swerved from his plans. He lacked vitality and

virility. He walked with the easy step of a successful southern planter, although he was scarcely of age. He loved to tell funny stories, which were always clean but often "dragged in." His smile was that of complacency rather than of enthusiasm. His employer advised him to go into other work, as he saw that he lacked a real interest in what he was doing. He had become a time-server. He looked at his watch a dozen times between 11 and 12, and two dozen times between 4:30 and 5:30. His work forced him instead of him forcing his work. In other words, he lacked "punch." His was a lazy body, mind and heart. And he was blaming the world and following the phantom called "ill luck," while really his own lack of industry caused the whole trouble.

In Gladstone's early life, when he was scarcely more than a boy, he made his resolve that one of the four habits of his life should be "industry." Faithful, hard, constant, hearty work always has been, is and will be a sure element of success. Chance play and gambling seek to destroy this vital germ of life. Easy money means easy life, and easy life is a form of slow death.

Industry does not mean, of necessity, monotony or drudgery. The innumerable revolutions in a well-oiled motor cause no irritation and are noiseless as at times they advance the machine to a speed of sixty miles an hour.

Ceaseless, constant, never-ending devotion to duty insures success. It means that a man has

punch and that is the best insurance of success, even though it be not a success of fame and riches.

Industry mothers ability. Industry establishes security. Industry means advance. The present temptations of youth seek to destroy this quality. One germ of that destruction is selfish indulgence. Carelessness, thoughtlessness and lethargy result. The cigarette-flourishing street corner loafer is often the product. The lad grows "sour" on life and his feelings are "low." When the time comes that normal men have established themselves, he has a glimmer of an awakening to his failure. Discouragement, despondency and frequently mutiny result, all because of a weak-kneed attitude working habit and a "let-the-old-world-roll" attitude in early manhood.

On my desk lies another letter from a lad about the same age, now living in our city. He says, "I want work anywhere, at anything, where I can earn an honest living and get ahead. I am willing to be up early and at it late at night and to put my arms and heart into the job. Give me a chance and I will try to carry out in the city what I learned on the farm." There can be no question as to the success of this youth. He has the punch.

KNOW YOUR CHILD

A VERY practical father surprised his boy one morning by appearing in the schoolroom at the study hour and talking with the teacher. There

were a few hushed whisperings and snickerings, and knowing glances were directed toward the boy by his mates. But suddenly the boy found that he was really mighty glad that his dad was there, for the teacher and he seemed to be in a happy and friendly mood. As his dad went out of the room, the teacher walked all the way to the door with him, and in shaking hands showed he was much pleased with the visit.

Unconsciously, the boy had the feeling that "Dad is certainly a wonder." "He is a real dad." "What a fine man he is!" "The teacher certainly does like him." "I wonder what he was here for?" "Nothing wrong about me, I guess, because they didn't call me up." At the door the father gave a little wave of his hand and a smile to the boy. That was all, but it spoke volumes to his son. It was the kind of wave that meant good fellowship, and the smile was the kind of smile that meant "everything is all right."

The visit also told the boy that his father was keeping in touch with him and with his school and that he knew what manner of man was teaching him.

Not long after that time the school principal and his wife were guests at dinner at the boy's home. The lad did not learn of it until that afternoon. He did not have to dress up. He was not told how to walk, but everything was just as natural as it always was. The food wasn't any better; the conversation was not stereotyped. They were "just

folks," and the principal and his wife seemed to have just as good a time as all the rest of them. After dinner they talked and listened to the radio and then mother made a suggestion that they all go to a wonderful talkie which had just come to town and for which they had tickets. The boy was not even asked to play his special number on the piano, or to "speak his piece." At the table he was not criticized for eating his soup from the end of his spoon, or for not sitting up straight and there were no secret kickings under the table. Everything was just as natural as could be. The boy felt that the principal of the school was a real man.

This is only a homely illustration. We can't all invite school principals to dinner, and maybe if we could it wouldn't be the best thing to do. But how can we expect to hold the best and fullest influence over our children if we do not know their daily surroundings and do not take time to interest ourselves in their every-day life?

The man who does not know his boy in his school life and in his play hours and keep sufficiently in sympathy with him to be in spirit a boy, too, is missing one of the greatest opportunities of his life and can never make up for it by paying tuition in a fine boarding-school or trying to "pal" with him in college days. The same observation applies to mothers with their daughters. The days of parenthood are priceless days. We lose or gain our children when they are children.

A famous lecturer on child development in speak-

ing to a large number of men and women of influence urged that parents should spend more time with their children in innocent play.

One of her hearers, a rather austere man, completely absorbed in his business, was much impressed. He went home that night and said to his seventeen-year-old daughter:

"Mary, let's get down on the floor together and play blocks."

Then to his son of fifteen:

"John, have you some jackstraws, so we can have a game together?"

The children stole quietly up to their mother's room and asked if their father was crazy. They were of course past the age for that sort of thing.

The father should have begun ten years earlier, but he had thrown away his chance. Nothing could ever bring it back. He might profit by an adaptation of the lecturer's suggestion, but he could never regain what he had lost.

Let's enter into the pleasure of our children when they are children. Then it can be done naturally. They recognize that as we are really "grown-ups" we cannot see things and do things just as they see and do them; but if we are simple and genuine about it they instinctively see a place for us in their fun. And they will not on this account respect us less when it is necessary to speak with authority.

HAPPY WHERE YOU ARE

A POOR fisherman always longs for the next stream, but a master of Izaak Walton's art catches trout where he is.

Life does not consist in filling the other fellow's place but in filling your own.

Theodore Roosevelt said, "Do the best you can, where you are, with what you have."

"If I were only situated as you are, life would be delightful," is the sentiment of the discontented, and is a libel on good nature as well as a lie. You do not think so, but the fact remains that you are just an ordinary failure. A successful life consists not in the abundance of the things you come to possess, nor in gaining the place held by another, but in doing well your part where you are.

Paul said, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." He was not born to this attitude; it was an acquisition. He said, "I have learned."

Happy dispositions are not born in many people. In fact, the contrary seems to be true. But every one may acquire a contented disposition.

"I know how to be happy with the tooth-ache," said a smiling salesman who was showing his line to a disgruntled shopkeeper. He won his man and got the name on the dotted line when others had failed. That he told the truth we are not sure, but he had the selling principle, anyway.

A contented life is like a sunshiny day in a London

fog. The smile will do more to make a home cheerful than Persian rugs or even a glowing fireplace.

"Incompatibility," is a ridiculous word. Every one and every place is incompatible to a complaining soul. Heaven would fail to suit a discontented Christian. Jesus Christ said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." Happiness is not an outward condition, it is an inward state. Paul and Silas were sufficiently contented in the Philippian jail to sing songs in the night. A clear conscience means close harmony with the best elements in life; a guilty one will always develop discord. The dust will blossom as the rose for the man who believes in irrigation and cultivation instead of laziness and grouchiness.

The happy lives in this old world are those that face actual conditions to improve rather than to deplore them. A wise sage who deals in commonplaces points out that the little street bootblacks put up the sign on a rainy day, "Shine inside."

A black, lightless night makes disconsolate the frequenter of "the white lights," but it is God's boundless exhibition hall to the astronomer whose vision is heavenward. Lincoln's woodyard with its rail-splitting was not a discouraging barrier to a noble soul but became an entrance to the White House.

"Where there's a will there's a way," is a time-worn maxim that the man who wants life handed to him on a silver platter should study. Contentment does not mean lack of proper ambition, but

taking in each stage of life's progress the joys that belong to it.

Contented souls find diamonds in the same ugly material which constitutes coal. A contented man or woman can make a hovel into a home, and light the lamps of happiness in the windows of life, whether in the city mansion or in a cottage of the remote forest.

"The common round, the daily task
Will furnish all we ought to ask,
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God."

One of the dearest little homes in Chicago consists of only two small rooms with an alcove; but two godly Scotch women make it a part of the great land of their inheritance, and enrich it with sacrifice and thoughtfulness. A few struggling plants suffice for moor and heather; cleanliness and thrift make that home a resting place for the weary.

Discontent is a viper which gnaws at the vitals of society, self-destructive and treacherous; content is the red blood of health and invigorates life amid want and sorrow. A contented soul slays wanton ambition and lazy indulgence. To the man who sees his immediate tasks as a pleasure the rasping clatter of the alarm clock is the welcome chime that starts a day worth while.

Home needs victory over discontent to become the abode of happiness. We must not be satisfied

with developing less than the best that is within ourselves; we do that best by being happy with what we have as we go along. Wooden chairs paid for are more comfortable than upholstery that causes fear of the collector's knock at the door.

Contented folk do not need cosmetics to erase wrinkles; radiant souls need not seek sanitariums.

"Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way
But to act that each tomorrow
Finds us farther than today."

More contentment, less fretful complaint, and more homes will be heaven for those who hope some time to make heaven their home.

DIGNIFY YOUR JOB

WE were spending the morning at Slain's Castle at Cruden bay in Buchan, northern Scotland. The wonderful old stone turret towering up from the rock-bound sea seemed like a time-old sentinel speaking out rugged freedom and stalwart character to the world. The gulls soared overhead; the rooks sent their echoing cries from near-by grove to answering wave as the tide rolled in and dashed its glorious spray on the castle wall.

We went through the spacious halls, aged with time. We sat in the rich old library lined with volumes of sheep and morocco. We roamed from

the ample dining hall with its rare paintings out into the great, clean kitchen with its huge irons and ample ovens. By the fire sat the housekeeper and cook, a matronly woman who for over a score of years had cared for the earl and his home.

She was cordial in her welcome to us. In the conversation we discovered her to be refined and cultured. She spoke of a friend of the earl's as "A Christian gentleman, a man who lived in the fifteenth Psalm."

Our discussion turned to American housewifery and the rare value of a true houseservant. She replied, "There is no more worthy and honorable task on earth than that of a faithful woman servant in the home. Why do girls want to sell ribbons and cloth by the yard instead of learning to serve and make home comfortable and happy?" She added, "Common tasks make life honorable and dignify our lives."

Social standing and public notice have little value in themselves for those who value most the simplest blessings.

Who ever won higher place in this old world than a true and devoted mother? Who crowns labor with reward like a father whose constant labor and sacrifice rear a worthy home?

It is "the cup of cold water" of which the Saviour spoke. It is the towel that wiped the disciples' feet. It is the service of a Nazarene lad who used the plane and saw at a carpenter-father's bench. It is a home in Bethany where a Mary and Martha

served their brother Lazarus and his personal friend, Jesus of Nazareth.

Common, ordinary duties make up the most valuable experiences in life. Beds properly made; rooms kept in order; meals served on time, and well; children patiently cared for; telephones promptly answered; customers waited upon cheerfully; errands done willingly; lessons learned regularly; finger exercises played, even the hands and faces of small boys washed and nails kept clean are signs of the honorable discharge of duty.

The man who is not above doing a simple ordinary task well and with good cheer is after all the man of real character.

Let us dignify the commonplace, and thus lift tasks supposed to be ignoble to their place of true nobility and standing, that those who think themselves above life's ordinary duties may find therein the highway to happiness and the avenue to honor and regard.

Maltbie D. Babcock touched mind as well as heart when he wrote those valued lines:

"We are not here to play,
To dream, to drift;
There is hard work to do
And loads to lift,
Shun not the struggle—
Face it!
'Tis God's gift!"

Everywhere and in all walks of life there are those who give themselves freely and eagerly to the doing of life's common tasks. Men who tread the city streets with calfskin shoes rather than patent leathers; men who see in the everyday task the finest opportunity to do their best; men who are more interested in life's ordinary tasks than in its special ones. Such men dignify common tasks and glorify duty.

BEING A SPORTSMAN

THERE is a standard among men which is universally known as "sportsmanship." There is a vast difference between the common meaning of "sport" and sportsmanship. The deed, word or attitude of the frank and manly life differs from that of the man who shows a low and little self when things do not go his way—when he faces defeat instead of success in some cherished effort. A good loser gains the respect of his followers and of those who do not agree with him. On the contrary, the man who cannot cheerfully accept defeat, and who immediately seeks to discredit the character and purpose of the successful competitor, is stamped by society as small, selfish and in the language of the street, "yellow."

The very gospel itself is the story of one who lost without bitterness. The cross is the story of victory through defeat. "Come down from the cross!" was a sneering challenge which was unheeded by

one who saw something greater in life than success, and who saw beyond the mere surface to the foundation values of life.

True Christian character is disclosed in the spirit of the defeated man far more than in his professions or claims. Evil nature discloses itself in the upset that failure gives to the man whose heart is wrong. It gives evidence of the truth that a man's real self is the spirit within him. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

There is no finer opportunity for a Christian to exemplify the character of His Lord than when he faces disappointment or defeat. There is no time when he can dishonor His Lord more signally than at such a time. The more trying his associates realize the struggle to be, perhaps on account of his natural disposition, the more they honor the man who wins out over pettiness.

Vinegar has its place, but it does not belong in the heart and the spirit of a Christian. The man who is sore and sour because he cannot have his way has no right to name the name of Christ. Although a charitable Christianity may pity him, the world in general despises and avoids him. His influence soon vanishes and he sinks into the shunned corner of the unknown and forgotten. He forgets what a smile is; little children turn the other way when they see him. He grows old prematurely and as he gazes frowning into the future he becomes constantly more hopeless, helpless and morose.

Compare with such an existence the genuine

Christian sportsman. Defeated, he accords just praise and fellowship to the successful man, and in every right way coöperates with him for the good of the whole. He enters in cordially and heartily with the cause of the majority. He hopes for a bright future even if that future does not appear to be such as he had planned or desired. Frequently he becomes more useful than a successful opponent, because of his wise judgment and his helpful attitude.

Happy, wholesome, encouraging, willing, alert, courageous, stimulating, he unites society and spreads good will and confidence. Men call him a "prince" and trust him, love him and honor him. "He lost," said a man of the world in referring to a recent contest in one of our cities, "but what a splendid sportsman he is!" That Christian man took a chance of honoring his Lord, and glorified Him far more than he ever had before in his life. Another man in that same group was heard to say, "If that is what it means to be a Christian I should like to be one myself."

POLITENESS AT HOME

THE old witticism that one is not responsible for his relatives but is responsible for his friends has been too often the excuse for a lack of courtesy and thoughtfulness at home. Those whom we love most are frequently those who see the worst side of us. This is not intentional and we

may be unconscious of it until our attention is directed to it. It is perhaps as natural as it is inexcusable. Those who are always about us and with us become so naturally a part of our lives that we are off our guard and free from restraint. The very fact that they understand us and do not bear against us any ill-will tends to make us careless and thoughtless.

The influence of this habit of inconsiderateness is especially harmful to children. Under the influence of example they acquire quickly careless habits in speech and action. Discourteous speech leads to a general lack of all restraint. Lounging at the table, slovenly manners and untidiness result.

Though he may seek to be "on his good behavior" when abroad, the child who is careless at home is very likely to evidence the same tendency away from home, and hence requires that special attention when visiting which embarrasses host and guest. Chiding in the presence of others makes both child and parent uncomfortable and robs all concerned of genuine pleasure. The necessity for it almost invariably indicates lack of true culture.

Home is the best place of all, and the best that life affords should be guarded and lavished there. The old idea that the parlor must be shut up with drawn shades and closed doors except when company comes is now relegated to tradition, and the living room of present-day architecture has taken the place of the old theory. Chipped and cheap china for every day and the good china for com-

pany is also out of date, and this wholesome change tends to make every one more careful and more appreciative of ordinary life in the home.

This very tendency should have its influence upon us in the common courtesies of life. Why not give our best to those whom we love the best? Mother's day has been given marked attention and has grown into a national observance. Why not let its influence be felt more definitely and continuously? Why not let it enter into the entire home life? Fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives, husbands, aunts, uncles, relatives, all are the best friends on earth if appreciated and considered. A smile for the stranger and a frown for the home is all wrong. It destroys the stock in trade of domestic happiness.

Compare the life of the boy who always wants to get away from home with the normal life of the boy who would rather be with his dad than with any boy on the street. Which lad is likely to turn out well? Compare the home life of the boy who is always at ease with that of the boy whose father feels it necessary to have him within silent foot-touch distance when the minister comes to tea. Which boy can be trusted when he faces the choices and responsibilities of college life? Given the natural training of common courtesy in the home and how naturally the boy develops into the thoughtful, gallant gentleman! The wild flowers of nature's training surpass in strength and beauty those of hothouse cultivation and impress the world more gen-

erally. The part of life often thought commonplace is the great field of opportunity. Let us make the home our first duty and the fireside the happiest spot on earth, where good fellowship and courtesy are the normal thing.

REASONING WITH GOD

ONE of our prison chaplains, a reformed mission worker, set a group of us to thinking along a new line recently. The subject under discussion was that of argument. A theological student who was doing personal work said he had met a good many arguments of late which he could not answer, and he was feeling rather discouraged. The chaplain was asked how he fared. He replied, "I get my men to argue with God, they come out all right." He then opened his Bible to the first chapter of Isaiah and read the eighteenth verse for his authority, "Come now and let us reason together said the Lord." He had struck a new note; we gained his enthusiasm, and saw his point.

Back of every difficulty and doubt lies sin. God declared through the old prophet, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." Man's arguments deal with circumstantial evidence but God deals with facts. Sin is the real trouble.

Doubt began with the sinful heart and ever urges it on. There is no real trouble except sin. Every-

one has sinned. Man only blurs sin, and clouds the issue. God deals *with* sin, and clears and cleans the life.

Human reasoning beguiles and confuses. One mind rivals another. Intellect wins. Divine reasoning goes to the root of evil and with masterful power forgives and cleanses, "Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord."

When a man is honest with his own soul and with his own God he knows he is a sinner, and hopelessness shames pride and false reasoning. Such reasoning also reveals God's respect for an individual soul without respect of person.

The Divine mind condescends to converse and reason with the human. The Unsearchable God clears the mystery of eternal forgiveness. No philosopher nor theologian has ever successfully convinced anyone through logic or phrase of the mystery of atonement, but Omniscience declares, and freely gives.

Salvation is not a statement but a fact; "Jesus saves" cannot be disputed. Why he saves; how he saves; we may not know, but nevertheless, "He saves." Yes, and he is *able* to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him. The Divine mind reasons in positive declaration. God reasons, and the sinner is convinced.

When a drifting soul is slowly but surely, and sometimes swiftly, moving on toward the falls of a Niagara, and a rope is thrown from the bank, *argument* ceases if he seizes or rejects the proffered

help. Swift acceptance is in itself a reasonable argument. Safety lies in grasping that rope. Souls left with God have their sure salvation. Man is not at hand, God is. His reasoning is a ready, present help and safety.

If the God that saves the criminal can be believed, and his salvation accepted, argument ceases, and the soul knows his Saviour. The simplicity of the gospel has proved the failure of many a reasoning soul. "He reveals still his truth unto babes." Man, by searching, cannot know God. The soul who will cease reasoning with himself and with his intellect and accept God's loving offer of salvation has learned to reason aright, and "knows Whom he has believed."

PUTTING MONEY INTO LIFE

MOST men or women who have made a fortune, or any portion of it, like to decide individually how to dispose of it. The man or woman who presumes to dictate, or even suggest too intensely, the proper method for such disposition is usually unpopular and unsuccessful. Many a philanthropy has been founded, encouraged and assisted by indirect suggestion, rather than by direct approach. It is for this reason proper and wise advertising is usually worth while, although this may be overdone.

Many a worthy gift has been the result of a single thought or suggestion in a sermon, address

or editorial. Irrespective, however, of such conditions, it is not out of order to call attention to certain great principles of philanthropy and giving, and to estimate, so far as possible, the relative value of varying types of gifts.

To me there seems to be no return greater than that put into individual life itself: to help a youth with his or her education; to lift the burden of one who is staggering beneath it and enable him to throw back his shoulders, fill his lungs and hold his head erect; to stimulate and strengthen the motive and hope of a lad who is beset with difficulties and overrun with problems. Any of these forms of giving bring great returns.

One of the greatest spiritual forces in our nation, a pastor who was recently made a bishop of a great church, was taken out of a grocery store where he was an errand boy and assisted in financing his education by one who was alert for just such opportunities of individual service.

A friend of mine has now twelve or fourteen young men and women whom he is educating, all of whom expect to enter one form or another of Christian service, and no one of whom could have entered directly upon his or her education without this man's direct assistance and coöperation.

Putting money into life brings the most remarkable return, and is the best investment our age or any age affords. It requires wisdom, insight, investigation, confidence and runs the risk of error and ingratitude, but after all that risk is a minimum one.

The same principle applies in the support of individuals after they have entered their life work and ministry. What finer bit of benevolence can be rendered than paying the life insurance premium annually for one of our home or foreign missionaries or teachers? A limited salary and usually heavy family burdens make it almost impossible to sustain such insurance, but here is a great burden lifted through the thoughtfulness of a genuine friend.

What deeper and more vital interest can be imagined than that which leads to the support of a worker on the field, either at home or abroad? Doubling or trebling one's life of usefulness in supporting another or others, who are giving their bodies, minds and souls to the work of the Church of Christ!

The same applies indirectly in gifts made to institutions, for after all here individual lives are framed in physical, mental, moral and spiritual development. Such gifts may be related specifically to men through institutions by means of scholarships or special appropriations.

Putting money into life means an added value placed upon life itself—life here and life hereafter; life present and life eternal!

UNSELFISH TALK

IN Gamaliel Bradford's quite remarkable and stimulating life of "D. L. Moody; A Worker in Souls," he speaks of Moody's "Earnestness, mod-

esty, humility and self-effacement." He adds: "No one knew better than he the insinuating, engrossing power of the I, its overmastering dominance when allowed to have its way, and no one fought it with more energy, in others and in his own heart. He once rebuked in a public meeting a brother evangelist who bitterly complained of the opposition he had met. 'I can tell you, sir, why they oppose you,' said Moody. 'Why? Because you spoke too much about yourself.' " "He did not propose to speak or to think too much about himself, if he could help it," says Moody's biographer.

In this testimony we have not only an interesting light on the great evangelist, but we have a most important life lesson, as well as a true suggestion for those who would be good conversationalists and agreeable company.

It is hard to leave self out of conversation especially when one has had little education, or is limited in experience. Temperament also has much to do with conversation, and there are those who seem to be very unselfish in other things who assert self and self-interest rather universally in conversation. This is done quite unconsciously and when the matter is brought up they are usually the first to assert their freedom from such habit.

There is a genuine bit of humor in this statement for those who are able to enjoy it. The very fact persons assert personal exemption when their very statements were personal only confirms their guilt.

And yet selfless conversation is not always de-

sirable for some people are at their best when speaking of their own deeds and experiences and are very dull when conversation drifts into other channels. Then it is also true that those who have attained are requested to speak of their work and find it most embarrassing to refrain. Nevertheless the best in conversation is benefited and inspired by those who put themselves and their own work in the far background. As a rule those who drag themselves continually into light have a false estimate of their real value, and gain prominence by the law of reflected light.

This fact was witnessed continually during the war. Those who earned fame on land, sea or in the air seldom claimed it, nor referred to deeds of valor! In fact, only in extreme cases do they even now speak and then usually under great pressure.

It is reported that a famous ace traveling from the west was forced to listen in the wash room to the blatant boastings of a man in uniform who claimed virtually that he had won the war. As they passed through one of the larger cities a detective boarded the train looking for an escaped convict. The ace quietly told the officer he thought he would find his man in uniform in the smoker; and sure enough he was right. When questioned, the ace said: "I knew he wasn't a soldier or he wouldn't have boasted as he did and a liar is very liable to be a thief as well."

If one leaves self out of conversation, others who

know his worth will do the talking often to his embarrassment rather than pleasure.

Those who read or travel as well as those who have been bred in the school of thought and culture have their minds too full of other subjects to direct conversation to self. Occasionally an enthusiast, young or old, is excused and actually enjoyed, but the art is dangerous and soon loses its charm.

Those who know the art of true conversation draw out others in matters of general or special interest, but are quite self-effacing themselves. Self-assertiveness in conversation leads to gossip and slander, and reveals egotism and pride.

It is not necessary even in self-defense, for those who know and love, will correct error and testify aright. The man silent as to his own worth makes and possesses friends everywhere but the blatant egotist speaks only for himself with never an echo.

"When he was reviled," we read of the Master, "He reviled not again." And when accused "He answered him not a word."

LISTENING IN

"CONFOUND the jazz and razz of the radio," said the man near us. "I've a good mind to give my whole outfit away; I'm sick of the stuff they're giving us."

"Why don't you 'listen in' on the worthwhile programs, dad?" volunteered the small philosopher whom I learned later was his small son.

The boy was given a rather curt reply, and told to "speak when he was spoken to," but the lad was right just the same.

The fault was not with the radio, nor with the programs, although some of them were wild and raw; the trouble was with the man himself. The real cause of much of life's displeasure and irritability is not in the program but in the choice of the listeners. Paul put it in another way when he wrote "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, *think* on these things." He added, "If there be any virtue and any praise, *think* on these things."

The world, as well as the concert hall and program, is full of jazz, but one does not have to "listen in," if he will adjust the machinery. The soul is sensitive and responsive to what it sees and hears. One is seldom forced to "listen in" and need not unless he permits it. A slight revolution of the dial blocks a vulgar program, and introduces the rare melody of a majestic organ or the inspiring voices of a splendid quartet.

The air carries both. We "listen in" on what we really desire. Why complain about discord when harmony may be enjoyed for the asking?

The attitude of mind has something to do with interpretation as well. Norway may be a land of rain, ruggedness and storm, and of green fields, waterfalls and scenery. It all depends on the "listener in." I have a friend who could not sleep on the boulevard because of the constant jangling,

roaring noises of passing automobiles until he forced himself to imagine he was in his home on the seashore and to think of the incessant whirring of the wheels as the waves beating on the shore! He now sleeps better in his city home than away. His imagination has become developed to distinguish good in many other things which formerly exasperated.

The increasing inroads of business had made a certain father peevish and unreasonable at home. The questions and play of the children worried and fretted him. He began to be less with them and to seek the seclusion and quiet of his club.

One day his wife 'phoned that the little boy had been hit by a passing car, and he rushed from his office to the hospital. He looked into that little helpless pain-filled face, and felt the pang of a joy taken from him. For months the lad wavered between life and death. How that father longed for that carefree laughter which before had troubled him.

When it returned and the boy was well again, you could scarcely entice him to the club. What made the difference? He had found out what life and home really meant! He now let *his heart* instead of his nerves "listen in."

A successful, worldly man of "big business" who never attended church was attracted by an address he heard a clergyman give at a railroad dinner. This led him to attend a church service. He was interested; became a regular attendant and is now

ardent in his support and commendation of the church. You hear him say such things now as: "I wouldn't miss it," "The sermon was great," etc. What has worked the change? Simply that he has begun to "listen in" and now sees intrinsic worth in what before he thought was mere jazz.

No, the fault is not with the machine, nor with the program, but with the "listener in" and his willingness to use his best common sense in making adjustments of his dial.

"He that hath an ear, let him hear."

BEATING A SIN

AMONG the questions which have recently come by mail a young man asks, "How can I overcome a temptation which seems to prey on the imagination?" Unconsciously this lad has touched upon the philosophy of a great share of temptations, for a large portion of them begin with the imagination.

Of course, temptation is as varied as human nature itself. The mind acts with great rapidity, and imagination is swifter than light. All unexpectedly, a thought flashes before our mental vision which may be the suggestion of any one of the senses. The delicate fragrance of a flower, the strain of a chord of music, the slight line of a picture, a quick glance of the eye, a motion of the body, a passing sentence on the printed page—anything, ever so slight, may put into motion a train of thought

which subtly carries the imagination with it and may lead to the reality of action.

An incident, a passing experience, may have in it nothing wrong, yet memory through the power of association can so divert the mind and associate it with sinful suggestion that before one is conscious of anything wrong the mind is swept into a channel which runs swiftly and surely into the sea of evil.

But the sin is not likely to be materialized unless this thought is consciously encouraged. Here comes in the application of the Scripture truth, "Watch and pray." The strength of virtue lies in immediate resistance. "Act, act in the living present," has as much to do with mental alertness as with physical force. Character must show itself in swift control. Evil suggestion requires prompt attack and speedy victory. "Do it now," is a matter of the mind as well as of the hand.

Kill the germ promptly, or it will generate with astounding vitality. "Overcome evil with good" instantaneously. A post-mortem examination of sin will reveal prolific mental suggestion as a process of far-reaching corruption. To encourage even the slightest evil thought changes a temptation into a sin.

Encouragement develops concentration, and the mind rushes sweeping into control of the whole self, and presently the act of wrong is committed as the expression of evil thought. Kill the tempting thought when it first raises its vicious head. Sinful

thoughts come without warning, but one who is prepared for them need not surrender. He conquers.

Idleness without doubt is the parent of much evil imagination. The sluggard turns readily to sin. A lazy mind like a lazy body cannot be relied on to leap to attack or defense. Self-control enables the mind to act instantaneously. An automobile which cannot be instantly controlled is not a good car to own, even if it is capable of sixty miles an hour.

The way to be prepared against sudden attack is to fill the mind with wholesome, active, inspiring thought, and put one's whole self into wholesome tasks. Thus the athlete who is faithful and vigorous in his training is less subject to subtle physical temptation than the lad who loves ease and lazy indulgence.

Keeping busy is usually a safeguard against temptation. "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do" not only suggests the danger to the idle but applies in an opposite sense, for Satan has a mighty hard time with the soul who is really "diligent in business serving the Lord."

Keep busy with good deeds; conquer the stealthy foe before he gets a "look-in." If you put your heel on the spark the second it touches combustible material there will be no flame. Pray for alertness, then act swiftly.

Evil is never eternally slain in this world. No matter how telling the blow, it will "bob up se-

renely." The way to safety is that of eternal vigilance. Most temptations come when we are tired. Beat sin by immediate opposition and a good deed.

"STARTING THE DAY RIGHT"

A YEAR is not a very long period. Three hundred and sixty-five is not a large figure, but a lifetime is made up of just such periods. The value of each single day is great. That value depends largely upon the way the day is spent, and this in turn is closely related to the start of the day.

Frequently life habits are so formed that the day is not "begun" at all. It simply comes and goes. But the start is worthy of thought. Few finish aright who disregard the start. "A good beginning makes a bad ending" is an absurd adage, emphasized by those who disregard persistency, faithfulness and patience.

A few thoughtful moments in the morning will direct and inspire the activity of the whole day. Men of force and leadership have usually known this fact. The constructive leaders in the church have been conspicuous in this habit. Of Christ Himself we read:

"In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." Solomon writes in Proverbs: "In the morning will I order my prayer unto thee, and will keep watch."

In the complex and crowded demands of our

day, early rising may not be practical. But this need not rob the day of its proper start.

Early morning meditation and study cannot become habitual unless evening habits and demands coincide. Plans for morning meditation must begin by formulating plans for proper evening retirement, or they will begin and end in failure.

We do not refer simply to early hours of meditation, but to a few thoughtful, unhurried moments with which to begin the day. The words of one of Job's counselors are sound advice: "Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee."

This acquaintanceship with God in the quiet of the day's start is worth all it costs. It may mean a little earlier rising, which must have back of it determination and will-power, but the habit once formed will prove its value. In a remarkable little pamphlet on "The Morning Watch," published many years ago, we read: "The neglect of this relationship is the cause of a nerveless Christian life."

To start the day with quiet purpose, fixed plan and natural poise means confidence and reserve. The sudden and unexpected will not throw one off his guard. The voice will be kept low, the nerve steady and the brain clear. Perplexities will be easily simplified, problems overcome and circumstances controlled. The occasional influence will not regulate life, but a habit of composure will act as a constant court of appeals with controlling judg-

ment and authority. The results obtained will doubly justify all effort or time required.

The sage wisdom of Horace, "What's well begun is half done," may be applied here as well as in other matters.

In the whirl of present-day activity, quantity is liable to disregard quality. The doing of many things is not always conclusive evidence of a successful day. The quality and character of the work should not be overlooked. Activity is not always service. The man who is anxious to appease a troubled conscience is usually doubly active, but the apt question is, "*What* is he doing?" A careless or lazy man may be "so busy doing what he wants to do that he has no time to do what he ought to do."

Starting the day aright in the sight of God and in quiet, prayerful meditation will give us the power of discrimination and choice. Less time will be spent in doing, but more will be done, and we will gain the "well done" of the faithful servant.

ADJUSTMENTS

ROUTINE and ceremonial religious observance may be a mere matter of habit, though ceremonial by no means should be judged as unrelated to sincerity and earnestness. Religious activity of today, however, must go farther. It must be spontaneous and alert. It must be ready for emergencies. It is not enough to be good, one must do

good; and if one is to do good today, or plans to do good in the future, he must have the power of quick adjustment.

A Christian worker must be willing and able to talk with inquirers in an after-service. But he must be just as quick to discern the chance of talking to a man when walking with him on the street, or riding with him thirty miles an hour in an automobile. The chance word in an elevator; the frank suggestion upon leaving a friend at the corner; the simple, wise intimation of interest where others are indifferent—these must be the expressions of the man who sees into the heart and is ever ready to adjust himself to the immediate opportunity.

A man was won to Christ one evening on Fifty-fifth street in New York city as the two friends, standing aside from the street light, removed their hats and offered a word of brief earnest prayer! As they separated with a handclasp—one went on his way simply thinking of his immediate task; the other realized that his purpose and spirit were changed for life. It was the one point and one moment in that man's life when he needed a friend and his friend had been wise enough to seize the opportunity.

Religion has a most practical phase and is thus interpreted today as never before. It does not mean that a man should wear his religion on his coat sleeve or talk in a sanctimonious voice. It means that his Christianity must have the ring of conviction and sincerity.

"That man is the kind of a Christian for me," said a man of the world as a friend left the circle in the lounging room at the club. "You would know he was a Christian wherever he goes, whatever he does and wherever he speaks. He enters a room as a Christian and goes out as a Christian, and still I never heard him say a single thing which embarrassed me or advertised his piety. He is the real thing and he represents the kind of a Christian this old world needs."

Such a testimony is worth while. The man in question was courteous, thoughtful, tactful, alert, sympathetic, kindly, generous, open-hearted and manly, and all for Jesus Christ, whom he followed, loved and lived.

Just to be oneself with the transforming power of Christ within; to do life's average duties; to walk the city streets; to be a friend; to wear a smile; to possess a firm handclasp; to trust your fellowmen; to be at your place in church (not from necessity, but from choice); to take your religion with you; to lead others to it; to take it naturally to them, these are the possessions, the gifts and the character of the true Christian of today.

A man's minister feels the strength of such friendship and assistance. A man's partner and clerk know the reality of his vital faith; his friend and neighbor know that Christ lives in him and his wife and children; in fact, all his relatives, realize that Jesus Christ lives and rules in the home. It is a sort of taking-Christ-with-you. It is the mean-

ing of that new popular hymn—"And He walks with me and He talks with me." It is piety practicalized, religion with rigor, faith with fraternity, Christianity humanized and humanity itself becoming like Christ. Such adaptability of faith and love in practical Christian living means hope, peace and power now and always.

SPRINGTIME

AT the time when dandelions have begun to color our grass plots and all the flowers of spring are painting nature, we cannot overlook the fact that human nature makes the occasion one for talking about spring fever and stepping languidly, and often speaking irritably. There is something incongruous and out of place in this. "The time of the singing of birds is come," why should not man accord in disposition and conduct with the flowers and songsters?

Of all the seasons of the year this should be the most delightful within as well as without. But the fact remains that spring usually means a letting-down instead of an uprising, especially with respect to our feeling and ambitions. With lighter clothing and straw hats we seem inclined to close the diary of active and inspiring service until the fall. "Spring is here, wait till September," is a frequent remark. "I'm feeling a bit worn-out, you'll have to excuse me," is another.

It seems to be the time for peevishness, fretful-

ness, yawning and general tendencies akin to ill-temper and disagreeable expression. This is a mere habit of selfish indulgence and should be noted and corrected. If ever a man ought to keep the corners of his mouth *up*, and walk with step alert, and heart aglow, it is in the spring.

What glories of life are all about us! The trees are clean in leaf and scent the air with delicate fragrance; the lakes are bluer, the rivers and streams increasingly clearer. The skies are bright, and the showers wash the dust and dirt from land and air. Fields are rich in browns and delicate shades of green; fruit trees burst into color and fragrance of blossom and gardens dot pictures of varied shade on the landscape far and near. In spring the great out-doors calls with thrilling ardor to walking, riding, motoring, golfing, tennis, baseball, swimming. In fact, Nature herself heralds joy and recreation into life. Parks, fields, woods, streams, links, diamonds, courts, bridle-paths, all call for good cheer and happiness. The voices of children ripple anew with fun and frolic. Lambs gambol and larks sing! Why not man?

Irrespective of all this, human dispositions seem to become careless. "What's the matter with father?" cries a small boy, and the mother answers, "Oh, it's spring, you know." Whereupon father justifies himself with a question to mother: "What's the matter with yourself?"

If it takes a little more thought and will-power at just this season to be cheerful, let us make the

effort, for of all seasons of the year this is the crown and glory, and a happy heart and cheerful face in May will foretell a splendid summer and the blessings of a "Harvest Home."

The other afternoon, together with a friend, we were feeling the lethargy of spring-fever, and were far from scintillating in wit and congeniality. Suddenly my friend suggested that we take to the park a group of children who were quarrelling in an alley nearby. Within ten minutes permission of parents had been asked, the faces of the youngsters washed, a baseball and a couple of bats bought, and we were on the street car. Two hours later, two middle-aged men were hot and physically uncomfortable, but the boys were loyalty personified. The men took a good bath, put on clean clothing, ate heartily at dinner, slept soundly, and the next morning spring-fever had become a relic, and the month of May the finest in the year.

"CHEER UP"

IT was the close of a busy, trying day. A number of unexpected and immediate requirements had crowded one on another, and forced work previously planned to the background. Now weariness and the lateness of the hour demanded pause and rest. As so frequently happens, the mind was more active than ever, and the moving thoughts seemed to bring discouraging clouds over the life-sky to dim the moonlight of the evening period.

In such circumstances one is apt to find himself muttering or courting thoughts that indicate bewilderment if not unhappiness. Why is life so complex and demanding, anyway? Why cannot others be less selfish and unreasonable? Why do others fail to do their part cheerfully? Why do they leave duties neglected for some one else to attend to? What is the use of trying when so many do not seem to care?

Then personal criticism begins slowly to creep in, and with it a sense of bitterness. Perhaps there is a sigh, deep and long, and even unmanly and uncontrolled tears, but more likely the emotions are desert-like and one cannot weep.

When going through such an experience, why not, with a smile, count your blessings? Cheer up. Things might be a lot worse.

Easy advice! One is at first disposed to resent it. But good advice, too, even though given a million times previously.

"Cheer up. Count your blessings!" How often we have heard it, and yet how seldom do we act on the advice! How many blessings there are to gladden our hearts if we will only stop, think and count them! What a glorious gift health is! How wonderful it is to be able to work! What a joy to have so many friends who believe in you, and how inspiring to be needed by others!

Our loved ones with us may also be tired and overworked, but with our cheerfulness we can lead them to happiness in the ordeals of life. What a

privilege it is to have a home in which to rest, and which is dependent upon us! How many childless people would gladly assume the problems that children bring! How many of our people would suffer with us if they knew we were troubled! How many good friends really love us and genuinely care! What a help are some of the interruptions and irregularities that have so disturbed us this very day!

After a distracting day, as we sink away into slumber we hear a distant churchbell sounding the midnight hour. It seems to say, "Peace! Rest! Peace! Rest!" and the Saviour's voice comes like a mother's lullaby, "Let not your heart be troubled." We sleep and arise happy and refreshed. It is worth while to "Cheer up."

WINDOWS OF THE SOUL

WINDOWS are as old as the ark itself for Noah had his instructions as to a window. In early days men who lived in rough houses of mud and stone and logs used the inner skins of wild animals for windows. Their only idea seems to have been to let a little light shine in, with no thought of looking out. Then at one time windows were but mere crevices in stone walls and were intended not so much for the entrance of light as a means of protection against the enemy's approach. The employment of windows for ventilation seems to have come more recently.

There is the old fable of a man bereft of reason who spent most of his time bailing the darkness out of the cave in which he dwelt. A small boy once saw him at his strange task and ventured to ask why he so labored. When told he said to the crazed man, "Why don't you punch a hole in the side of your cave, and when the light comes in the darkness will be gone?" The fable continues that the maniac chased the lad away with a sneer and went on with his crude task.

Yes, many a life continues to exist in a windowless house, and vainly attempts to bail out the darkness, still unconscious of the folly and waste of it all.

Windows cost little and yield much. They let in light and air but they afford vision and view as well. They admit sunshine and they emit cheer. The cleaner the glass the clearer the vision.

The soul has its windows but sometimes blinds are closed and shades drawn, and rays of light and cheer can neither enter nor exit.

Scientists tell us that disease and death lurk in the darkness, but that sunshine, like pure air, destroys evil germs and impurity. The sunlight also wakes up those who sleep and makes the lazy restless. Even Rip Van Winkle could not sleep when the sun shone in his face.

Windows open the way for Old Sol and his strong healing power. It is a common sight in the little mountain villages of the Alps to see the women and children washing the windows at the great vil-

lage trough of running water. Their windows are removable, and they keep them very clean.

One day I asked a native Swiss who could talk a little English, why they washed their windows so often. She answered, "We have a beautiful country."

She has said much in her reply. Their windows had reason to be spotless for they looked out on a lovely land with waterfalls and forests and snow-clad mountains, and green pastures with quiet cattle peacefully grazing, and happy children picking wild flowers. The clean windows brought all to view.

But there is another side to consider as to the windows of life! Those without can see within. The world is often a cheerless, cold, hard place to many a wanderer. The light and fireside within may use the window to brighten lives without.

What would the Yuletide be without the lighted candles and the holly wreaths?

The story is told of a lad lonely and forlorn who passed the lovely lighted windows of a church. He stopped and listened to the hymn, then entered and there found his way back to God and home and purity of life. The windows did it. The light shone out.

"The face is the window of the soul." If the life and light of "The Light of the World" is within our souls the face will be His window, and those who have lost their way will see the light, and find their way home.

INVESTING IN YOUTH

THE matter of wise investment has never received more thought and suggestion than at the present time, and especially in our own country. Perhaps the reason may be found in the fact that we have more money to invest than formerly, and that more firms are engaged in the business of promotion and development. Safe and worthy investment may well command the attention of those who have means to use and bequeath.

But after all, the keeping and securing of money is not the ideal. Money is of no real value save as it can be used, and give a return for its use.

In the proper use of money, especially where there is an abundance, can there be any wiser use than in assisting young life to get the proper start? To invest in human life is to establish the future, especially if young life is started and grounded in the right way.

Many instances of this have come to all of us in our experience. A young man of exceptional promise had the earnest desire to study for a professional life, if possible to fit himself for a professorship. As he was about to enter an Eastern college his father was suddenly stricken with a fatal disease and the care of the family fell upon him. He was about to give up his ambition, and enter a grocery store as an errand boy, when his pastor called him into his study for an interview. A frank conversation revealed the thwarted ambition of the youth,

but led that pastor to ask him to return the following day to discuss the matter again.

Meanwhile the pastor thought of several members of his congregation who had gone through sorrow in the death of children, and remembered one, a widow of large means, whose only son had hoped to fit himself for a professional life. He sought an interview that very afternoon and was of course pleasantly received. He stated the case to her fully and suggested that here was a chance for her to realize the hope she had had for her son. She was at once interested and decided she would like to talk with the boy in question. An interview was speedily arranged which resulted in her assisting in the support of the youth, and also supplying the necessary funds not only for his training but also a modest amount to assist in the support of his family without robbing them of the responsibility of self-support.

The years sped by, and the sum total of the funds expended by her was less than five thousand dollars, which she might have spent on a new car or upon some unneeded luxury. She gained a new interest in life through this foster son, and when she attended his graduation, in which he was an honor man, she was honored, and regarded as one of the first guests among many most charming educators. The whole family of the youth had turned out exceptionally well, and the entire circle of the woman's friends had been enlarged into an enviable group of those who were making the world

better and brighter instead of the commonplace followers of a rather sordid and self-satisfied social aristocracy. Life had found for her a new and delightful expression, and her sad, rather melancholy existence had been born anew and taken on a happy reality. The young man has become one of the country's great educators, and no one prizes her investment more than the one who made it possible, although the world knows nothing of it.

Here is another illustration, but of a different kind:

A comparatively young minister was becoming prematurely old and worried, and his work was dragging. Just what the trouble was no one seemed to know. He was about to resign his charge and thought of leaving the ministry. A fellow pastor who loved and valued him sought a confidential interview with him, and breaking down reserve by his genuine interest discovered that the real trouble was the old story of a weighty debt which was sapping his very life blood. By wise and silent action he brought the matter to the attention of a benevolent but retiring elder in his church. The man sent for his pastor and won his confidence sufficiently to hear his whole story. The debt, for which the man was not entirely responsible, was cancelled, and the young minister entered upon his work with new life and an entirely different spirit. New life entered the entire parish and it became, as if by magic, the influence which awakened the entire presbytery.

No one knew *why*, but the thoughtful pastor-friend and the benevolent far-seeing elder. At the time of the elder's death his pastor stated that "to him he owed his life and work, and a city had been blessed by the timely and Christ-like investment of a few thousand dollars." Innumerable cases might be cited to prove the wisdom of a proper and wise investment of money rightly used to save life and conserve power. To put one's money into such channels among the aspiring youth of today is to build the Kingdom and erect monuments far more lasting than stone or brick. Such investments *are secure for time and eternity.*

LEANING ON OTHERS

TALKING with a friend recently, he quoted from his son—a business man who employs scores of men as salesmen: "Ninety per cent of the men who apply for jobs and start for us are *leaners,* and we cannot keep them. We need men who stand on their own feet and work out their own problems."

The remark impressed me. How many able-bodied men, after all, are leaners, lollers, or, as the Old Testament sage puts it, "sluggards," as he added the suggestion—"Go to the ant thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise."

We are told that over fifty per cent of those who have grown to mature life are dependent upon the other fifty per cent for their livelihood; in other

words, the earning capacity or support of more than half of the men and women in civilized society are dependent upon the other fifty per cent to take care of them, and in many instances they seem to take it for granted that such is their right.

Many of these belong to that unhealthful part of society who think that the world owes them a living, and that all they need to do is to lean, or perhaps sit in life's easy chair and wait for life's cooks and life's waiters to bring to them their food upon a silver tray.

Society is honeycombed by this type of mind, but it is as hollow and undependable as any superficial form of living.

God gave us bodies, minds and hearts with which to work out our own salvation. There is a glory in independence and the world can never progress without it. The Scotch lass who was seeking employment quickly returned the five dollar bill volunteered to her by an interested party as she replied: "No, thank you. I do not want help. I want a chance to help myself. It is not money that I want, but honest employment."

The sidewalks of our cities will always contain able-bodied men who, with their cap visors pulled low and with hands in their pockets, solicit assistance. Among them there may chance to be one who is worthy, but generally speaking they are a race of leaners, a tribe of city-tramps who are not willing to exert themselves to live.

Society, however, can deal with this class far

more easily than with those who know better, and are not willing to make the effort for self-respect and self-support. Like the lad who "cribs" in a written examination, instead of studying and preparing his own material, there is for this class little in life save distrust and disaster.

There are those aged or ill who *should* lean and whose infirmities are to be pitied. Every strong arm, backed by a warm heart, loves to have such lives lean upon them, and it is far harder for such gentle souls to lean than it would be for them to stand alone. We do not refer to these people. But we do say that those who can and should bear life's burdens and meet life's problems independently, should not lean on others.

COMMENCEMENT DAYS

JUNE is not only a month of roses and weddings but of Commencements. Graduation days have come again and gone. The happy faces and white dresses of high-school girls and the clean, strong bodies and manly hopes of youth have again brought cheer, encouragement and general goodwill. Colleges and universities have again sent out into the world tens of thousands of aspiring, eager sons and daughters to face the actual problems of life, and assist in the great tasks of the nation and the world.

One often wonders, when attending these inspiring exercises, just where all are to find a place,

and how all are to adjust themselves to new duties and surroundings. But how quickly year passes year and how easily the great procession passes on to join the great body-politic which we call society. Is it not worth while to stop and consider in this connection how *the Top* in any industry, profession or calling always has places of readiness waiting for the industrious and faithful? Excellence seems to establish its own reward everywhere. He who excels and has gained qualities of character quickly finds this open door, and enters to rise steadily and surely to his waiting task. The simple commonplace virtues are the surest means of advancement.

Industry, thoroughness, diligence, cheerfulness, promptness, cleanliness, order, regularity, alertness, neatness, naturalness, thrift and honesty *attain.*

A very few years evidences the sifting process of any age. The first five years or even less prove the success or failure of most college graduates. The professor who told his graduating class that the four years following their four years in academic halls would settle their destiny, was not far astray. Ability, cleverness, heredity, pleasing personality, even brilliancy itself, will not suffice apart from the simpler virtues enumerated. Accompanied by them young people will develop position and influence more readily; but lacking these, they will fail, and that deplorably.

The responsibility of students in advanced education is greater than ever before. The very future

of higher education depends upon them. More thought, time and money are given by the state and by individuals for advanced education than ever before, but its permanent value rests in the character of the output.

A college or state university is not great nor valuable simply because of its campus, architecture and traditions. Even its trustees, endowments, curriculum and faculty cannot give it permanent power if its graduates do not qualify in life's great active arena. Oxford and Cambridge have made Great Britain great by their sons. The honor of any school is in her graduates! The glory of the home is not in her inheritance but in her sons and daughters. The youth of today make the national character of tomorrow.

Commencements and graduation days herald the future. Our graduates are to be our citizens, our fathers, our mothers, our teachers, our statesmen. They will make our business standards, our laws, our principles, our faith of tomorrow. Let us rejoice in their hope and believe in their future. Expecting from them the *highest* and *best* they will not fail us.

ACCEPTING CONDITIONS

A GREAT deal is said today as to resisting difficulties and making conditions other than they are. The weak man is defined as the man who accepts conditions and the strong man as the

one who changes conditions. Undoubtedly there is much truth in this statement and in the sentiment which grows out of it, but there is another side to the question. There is a grace and wisdom in accepting conditions, for many conditions cannot be changed, and frequently character is seen in quiet acquiescence and the working out of a difficult problem with its own premises rather than by changing those premises.

A helpless invalid may be forced to accept his load. As a result he may weaken and die from discouragement or he may prove triumphant and change defeat into victory.

Maltbie D. Babcock once wrote a most effective booklet upon the subject, "The Success of Defeat." It was telling and influential and it had large circulation thirty years ago.

Character is not only seen in changing conditions but in accepting them.

A theological student confined to one of our hospitals for some three months, receiving words of consolation and sympathy from a classmate, replied: "Well, I don't know. I am not sure that my lot is not better than yours. Anyway I am going to accept it and make the most of it." That lad won two earnest physicians and several nurses to Christ during his stay in the hospital, and in each case no minister or religious leader had been able to influence them throughout the years. By his patient, faithful, friendly life he led them into conversation which revealed the spirit of Christ and

completely won them. He changed defeat into victory.

A young mother wonders why she cannot enter more fully into social life and why she should have such full care of her children. Day after day they weary her although she loves them, and the tiring task seems to increase instead of decrease as the months go by, but the quiet acceptance of this loving responsibility transforms a hardship into an immediate joy.

There is no task on earth like the task of motherhood, nor one with greater potentiality for the future, nor one offering larger opportunity for benefit to the great world in its need. When mothers are more thoughtful, patient and faithful, the sons and daughters of earth will make better citizens.

The acceptance of home life with all its problems shows the Christ spirit more than any form of more public activity.

The restlessness of our age prompts us all to feel that other tasks are better than our own but it is not true.

Roosevelt's words, "Do the best you can, where you are, with what you have," should be stamped into the character of every man and woman of the nation.

Paul said, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content." He did not receive this by inheritance. He acquired it. This patience met every test of his life and this spirit of acceptance of conditions, cheerfully and prayerfully

with determination, purpose, and hope, will solve the problem of any life.

We also have the added word, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

THE FACE IN REPOSE

HE was standing near a busy street corner apparently waiting for a friend. I was shocked as I looked from my taxi window. Could it be the man of vigor, strength, sympathy, courage, serenity and cheerfulness whom I had known through the years? His face was apparently listless, worried, worn, haggard, almost lifeless. I rapped on the glass as the traffic stopped the car, and gained his attention. Instantly there was a change. The old light lit up the eye; the wrinkles were erased; the anxiety vanished and the same old happy, inspiring smile bespoke his real self, the man I had long loved and honored. Which was the real man —the man unconscious of inspection, or the man recognized?

In a sense both, for the same old nature and spirit were there, although hidden beneath the outer wrappings of weariness and strain.

It is well to consider the state of mind and condition of body which cause such misrepresentation in countenance when one is left to himself. The unobserved moments of life outnumber those spent among companions. We are told that "we make our faces."

Those who best bear life's heaviest burdens and carry largest responsibilities do not always show it in their faces. In fact the ablest of them seem to do so without worry and apparent anxiety. The troubled expression signifies worry and fear. A cheerful face has much to do with insuring confidence and placing trust.

Faces in repose tell tales more accurately than faces lit up by unexpected meeting or friendly glance. The lines of the face are the result of exercise and habit. A radiant soul is seen in a radiant face. This is no artificial substitute for a cheerful, winsome countenance.

The world needs everywhere the influence of good cheer and optimism. A naturally happy face is never confused with an assumed smile or grin.

Superficial pose of face or manner is quickly discovered and discounted.

On the other hand, to move in and out of society with the composure and self-possession of a cheerful countenance makes one welcome anywhere.

Such portraits adorn our art collections and have elevated art; far more, such lives enrich and beautify city streets, public gatherings, church services, school rooms and, above all, the home.

"Hasn't our teacher the finest face!" said a small girl to her mother. "Every one likes her," she added, and said: "There isn't a boy or girl in our grade who isn't crazy over her."

Discipline will not be hard with such a condition, nor influence small.

Whether the face is the "mirror of the soul" or not I am not sure, but it is certainly an index.

Nothing seems to age one more than a sad, worried or irritable countenance.

Gray hair, or the lack of hair altogether, is not such a time indicator as are wrinkles and mouths curved downward.

We can cultivate happy expressions if we will, providing we have the right disposition beneath. Nothing spreads sunshine and dispels gloom so quickly as a face cheerful and animated when in unconscious repose amid the ordinary and accustomed tasks.

Religion without a cheerful countenance is religion gone astray.

KEEP TO THE RIGHT

THE ordinary public signs used to direct us aright, and with which we become so familiar, are worthy of our consideration not simply for their immediate purpose, but as a reminder of safe guidance in other matters. We started to go up the crowded stairway of a city automobile exhibit. At the bottom stood a robust, dignified policeman, a sort of special "traffic cop" for that hallway. The stairs were divided by a rail, with many ascending or descending on either side. "Keep to the right, please," repeated the officer. "That's a good rule to follow through life," I remarked. He answered, "That's sure right every time."

"Keep to the right." "How many of the ordinary guide signs of everyday life have a deeper lesson in them," I remarked to the friend with me. "Keep to the right," "Watch your step," "Keep moving," "Don't crowd," "Look at the signal before crossing," "Boulevard stop," "Curve just ahead," "Look out for cross street," "Go slow: school," "Quiet zone: hospital," "Step to the front," "Wait till the car stops," "Do not put your head out of the window," "Safety first." We might name others, but these give to us a sufficient suggestion of care and thoughtfulness. They prompt us to consider before we act; to realize the importance of cherishing life in the doing of things rather than merely in the abstract.

Character, after all, is not so much a definitely marked attainment as a process. It is not the broad record that counts so much as putting down right figures in an ever-growing column of present activity.

Right living is a matter of day by day progress, and righteousness is a highway, not a finished building. "Keep moving" is an actual condition of life. Others are on the highway, hence we must not "crowd." "Live and let live" go together. Every man truly is his brother's keeper. Society is not an abstract term but a concrete relation.

If you go to the left instead of "keeping to the right" you will collide with those coming from the other direction. Words and anger will result. Your irregularity will cause complaint and ill feel-

ing, and social relations have been disturbed. The fault is not with society, but with you; you took the wrong side.

Failure to "keep to the right" means disorder, collision, injury and perhaps death. It causes obstruction and delay. What seems to be a small matter may be the start of general confusion.

A man may "keep to the right" a thousand times, and lose all he has gained in confidence and reputation by just turning to the left once. He must always "keep to the right."

I might have resented the request of the officer that evening when he seemed to single me out and say, "Keep to the right!" He was simply doing his duty. In a large company many are careless and absent-minded, and without his free guidance would have turned up the left stairway only to cause and to suffer inconvenience and opposition.

God has stationed cautionary sentinels and servants all along life's highways and bypaths to suggest and help. Why should we be troubled or irritated by them? Why not appreciate and respond in a word of gratitude, and with deeds of cheerful compliance?

This busy world in which we live is so filled with hurry, worry and onrush that many a man becomes self-centered and absent-minded and turns to the left unconsciously. That little word of "Keep to the right" should be written in our hearts and welcomed whenever repeated, whenever we seem to grow careless or forget.

In the busy street one day I ran unwittingly into another man who also was in wrong. We were both annoyed. "Can't you see where you're going?" he said curtly. My blood was up, but the inner voice said, "Keep to the right!" (I had turned to the left in passing him.) "Excuse me, sir," I replied. "My fault; I turned to the left."

He stopped, smiled and we recognized one another. Thirty years out of college had changed us both. An accident had resulted in a renewal of happy memories and old friendship, and all because an acknowledged wrong had righted a thoughtless action.

If you have turned to the left, admit it, and thereafter "keep to the right," and misunderstandings, grievances and possible disaster will give place to pleasantness and progress.

FRIENDS AS YOU GO

THE train was awaiting connections at Omaha, we were attracted by the wistful look of a shepherd dog, who with wagging tail and an occasional bark stood before the platform of the dining-car. Presently the cook threw him a good-sized bone, and away he went followed by two or three less fortunate mongrels, who kept their distance. In a neighboring little grass-plot there was growling and guarding as the favored canine enjoyed his feast.

We had a word or two with the good-natured

cook. "Oh, I have them all along the way," he said. "That dog waits for me every trip! His name is Rex! At the next stop Old Towser will be waiting." Sure enough, Old Towser came loitering down to the train as soon as we stopped. Another bone was thrown to fill his hungry mouth and his wagging tail betokened his gratitude as he sauntered away, with a solitary follower keeping his distance behind.

"Yes, they are all my friends on this trip," answered the cheerful dispenser of food, as he shut the diner door.

But the lesson stuck, "Friends along the way," why not make friends as you go? A cook on a diner hasn't the easiest nor happiest job in the world. The waiter meets people but he doesn't. He does a large share of the work but is seldom remembered unless in protest because his work is not done satisfactorily. Yet this man had his sunlight anyway. At every station "a friend" was waiting for him. He was watching for them and remembering them. He was whistling as he entered the kitchen. Life had its meaning and he had made another dog happy.

Wearied with many duties and tired from overservice we suddenly forgot our problems and began to think of life as a constantly recurring journey along which we could find eager friends awaiting us, and gain constantly a welcome.

When Austin Phelps, the old professor of over a half century ago, left his work at Andover Theological Seminary to go to his summer home down East

he used to have a chat with the aged conductor who had been on the road for years. One day the old man seemed depressed. He walked with a burdened step, and downcast eye. Questioned by a passenger as to what the matter was, he replied, "I've just had the saddest word for many a day, Austin Phelps is dead. Every year I have looked forward to our annual visit together when he went to the shore. Why, he and I were real friends and he treated me just as if I were one of his own family. I shall miss him sorely."

What a testimony! No wonder the great Scotch philosopher said, "a great man shows his greatness by the way he treats little men." It takes us back to a Greater of whom it was written "The common people heard Him gladly."

There is a western custom which prevails in Colorado and quite generally in the West, of lifting the open hand in greeting as one passes a ranchman on the road. Auto drivers constantly lift the hand in greeting and seldom without a response! "Friends along the way." No introduction is needed save that of simple comradeship. It betokens good-will! It strengthens brotherhood. It makes life happy.

"There's a fine man," said a newsboy, as a gentleman of rank passed his stand. "Why?" said his companion. "He always says good morning to me," was the quick reply. "He owns the mill over yonder," he added, "but he can have me too."

Christian courtesy is akin to valuing others and the man who has "friends along the way" is the

man who knows the meaning of the Golden Rule, and interprets aright the adage of the "Cup of Cold Water."

THE GREENS OF SPRING

THE Divine Artist is working in the Spring time as well as in the gorgeous Fall. As life begins to show itself in bursting leaf, and cropping wild flower the colors are being mixed deftly on the palette of nature, and every landscape canvas shows God's handiwork. How many are the varied shades of green! Every tree seems to yield a differing tint and still all harmonize in blending colors.

The deep green of the evergreens makes more vivid the fresh, delicate tints from the almost yellow light to the slightly-browned bursting leaf.

Elm, beech, maple, ash, birch, poplar, oak, and willow with their lesser friends all paint their slightly differing hues into the picture, all with their restful blends of green. The carpet below adds even other shades with the far-reaching stretch of grass, broken with underbrush of growing life. The browns of earth and pine needles enrich the picture and here and there the pure white dog-wood suggests with bold exactness that winter's snows have found a warmer chastity in blossoming life and whiteness.

And all is the revelation of *life* and *growth*. Nature is humming its quiet accompaniment to the song of birds, and sending back its happy answer to blue sky, fleecy cloud, and refreshing shower.

The beauteous shades of color in the life of the spring suggest the varied tints of human traits and tendencies which make up life's landscape of character. All are human but how manifold and varied! Why not let the picture glory in this varied artistry of the soul? Not only tints but the form and cut of leaves and blossoms all differ, but deftly add to the general beauty of the whole. From their inner sources of being they spring into outward form and color, each true to its own species and variety, but there is no quarreling nor criticism; silently and slowly they magnify and glorify their Creator. Only the devastating storm or blighting parasite disfigures the harmonious scene, and these come from without.

The oak does not decry nor ridicule the maple for its imitating or differing leaf. The birch does not call attention to the unleaflike form of the willow. Silent appreciation and quiet harmony betoken peace, health and development. The trees of forest and glade dwell and grow in peaceful companionship refreshed and strengthened by the same sun and shower and afford shade and shelter, blossom and fruit to all who claim their gifts. Their silent ministry may well teach us true lessons of friendship and harmony.

"The trees of the field clap their hands" in loving appreciation of the God of Nature, and his annual, never failing, return of life, beauty and shade.

Not only "The heavens declare the Glory of God, but the firmament showeth His handiwork;

Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge." Shakespeare versed it sympathetically for us in those classic words of "As You Like It."

"And thus our life exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

It is not strange that The Master when wearied with affairs and people went into the woods, nor that He loved the Mount of Olives, and Bethany.

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

A Study of the Sermon on the Mount

A YOUNG friend of mine was told to select for his final thesis in the English department at Harvard the greatest oration in the world's history. He chose the "Sermon on the Mount." The choice was no less interesting than creditable. This remarkable sermon is immediately followed by the statement, "When Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes." The authority of Jesus has been evident ever since that day.

The oration which we term the "Sermon on the Mount" contains only about two thousand five hundred words, and these are of the simplest and most

commonplace. There is not a sentence in it which is hard to understand, no matter how difficult its precepts may be to interpret and realize. It can be read carefully in twenty minutes. It deals with the heart and applies to practical life.

Jesus begins with "The Beatitudes," the "Blesseds," eight of them, ending in the personal ninth beatitude of the blessing of persecution when suffering for false accusation.

He then advises his hearers they are the "Salt of the Earth" and the "Light of the World," illustrating by the candle and bushel, and admonishing them to let their light shine. Then he touches upon the fulfilment of the law damaging the Scribes and Pharisees for their pretense. This is followed by direct words as to anger and resultant murder, and counsel as to reconciliation.

The Sermon then touches the problem of home and marriage and the sins of impurity. The sin and worthlessness of swearing follow with the wisdom of simplicity of speech in "Yea, Yea," and "Nay, Nay." Then comes the non-resistance of evil and the law of the second mile. Quickly there follows the love one should bear to his enemy and the admonition to aim at perfect living.

The matter of alms and quiet benevolence is followed with the statement that "Thy Father will reward" openly. The subject of prayer is revealed in "The Lord's Prayer," emphasizing by repetition the important relation personal forgiveness bears to prayer. Fasting is dealt with in like manner.

The real value of possession is then treated, culminating in light and vision. The truth of two masters naturally follows this thought and suggestion as to freedom from anxiety. He here illustrates by the fowls of the air, the lilies of the field and Solomon's glory, with the concluding word "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God."

The judgment and consistency of life follow and prayer again is treated as well as the willingness of our Heavenly Father to bestow good gifts—then entrance by the straight gate and narrow way. Then a brief warning follows as to false prophets and judgment. Finally comes the searching surety of entrance into His kingdom by "doing the will of God" and the illustration of the wise builder who, hearing aright His words, "built his house upon the rock." As Jesus finishes this remarkable sermon the people are forced to the conviction that He had "authority," and the world has been listening to this sermon ever since for the strength of simplicity will stand the test of time.

MYSTERY

IT was twilight on the Hudson. Our train swiftly sped over the rails ever changing the lovely view of the fascinating river, and the mountains beyond, for we were passing the Catskills. Here and there lights were appearing. A storm was raging on the distant foothills, shutting off the higher peaks from sight. The cloud and mist of the storm added to the

beauty of the scene, and set in motion dreaming and philosophizing!

The lights are temporary, but the distant mountains are steadfast and eternal. As the night comes and darkness deepens, more and more the varied lights perform their needed tasks and shine out with increasing glow and cheer. The mountains grow dim and disappear; still, the lights shine, but to die, and when the sun is up all their service ends, and even if still left burning, are not seen!

But the mountains *ever remain.* Storm and cloud may hide them from us, but uninfluenced by passing condition or changing witness they remain unmoved and sure. Countless eyes will see the lights and be guided by them; seen from afar, they shine even more brightly at home. They glow and glitter in the distance; they guide and protect near and far, but the mountains are clothed in darkness and forgotten.

We all love the light and are attracted and guided by it, but who gives a thought to the rugged distant mountains hidden in cloud, darkness and night?

And yet when the morning wakens there they will stand—faithful sentinels of time, citadels of strength and never-failing land marks of direction and location! Trustworthy, reliable, immutable in their permanent dignity and glory. Clouds and fogs and storms have not influenced nor changed them. They seem to call these very elements into being and glory in their presence.

But, are they eternal? The Psalmist answers—

"Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth or ever Thou had'st formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God!" Later he adds, "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Is man then inclined to consider the lights or the mountains?

But, the one is practical, we say, and affords us necessary vision, and direction and safety. Yes, but are we forgetting to value the permanent, unseen, eternal verities of life? Do we disregard the mountains because cloud and storm and night hide them from view?

True, this mystery surrounds much that makes up life itself, but the inspired writers tell us that "we are stewards of the mysteries of God." That we "are to look not on the things that are seen but on the things that are not seen, for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

To look only on the things that glitter and glare; to depend only on the lights of life is to forget the backgrounds and heights of faith and assurance.

If into the woods Christ had not gone, out of the woods He would not have come. Life comes from death; light from darkness; faith from mystery!

"Blessed are those who have not seen Me, and yet have believed."

Let us not forget the mountains and if the clouds

and storms befog and terrify, let us look behind and within the storm to the sure and steadfast reality of the unseen, as we consider that "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

"Father, in Thy mysterious presence kneeling,
Fain would our souls feel all Thy kindling love,
For we are weak, and need some deep revealing
Of strength and grace and calmness from above."

THE FORGED CHAIN

NO more remarkable testimony of the iron hand of evil-habit has been pronounced than that of the so-called "King of Chicago's Underworld" in his statement to the head of the Philadelphia police department upon his arrest last year. Capone said: "During the last two years I've been trying to get out, but once in the racket you're always in it, it seems. The parasites trail you, begging for favors and for money, and you can never get away from them, no matter where you go. I want peace, and I'm willing to live and let live. You fear death every moment, and, worse than death, you fear the rats of the game, who will run around and tell the police if you didn't constantly satisfy them with money and favors. I haven't had peace of mind in years. Every minute I was in danger of death. The parasites follow you, no matter where you go. I fear the parasites more than death."

This man, young and rich, apparently sought the protection and seclusion of prison, but still found he was pursued by the relentless vitality of his own realization.

Whether we call it conscience or some other name, the chain of evil he has forged binds and confines his own soul.

As an editor has said, "It doesn't speak well for a life of crime. If you win, you lose. Easy is the descent to Avernus, but almost impossible the ascent therefrom."

Obedience to law means freedom; the breaking of law forges a chain that binds the soul and fetters life. That which applies to this noted and reckless criminal applies to all nations, as well as individuals! Disregard of law and assumed excuse for breaking it does not weaken the links of the chain, nor free the culprit. The "hound of heaven" still pursues relentlessly. As was said of Francis Thompson, the author of the book by that name: "He was unsatisfied, discontent, naked and alone."

The ancient Roman form of imprisonment was the chaining of the prisoner to a Roman soldier, who went with him everywhere and always. Such a chain is forged in the furnace of ever-burning retribution. There is a living, present meaning in the old doctrine of eternal punishment. The fuel for that furnace is careless disregard of law, but, nevertheless, the heat welds the chain.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." But living death is far worse than sudden catastrophe.

Only one power can sever that chain and set the prisoner free, and that is the power released to the thief on the cross at Calvary.

MUSIC AND WORSHIP

AS the great congregation closed the morning service I could not see a soul who was not singing. The deep, full-toned organ was almost drowned in its majestic accompaniment, as those matchless words of the great English hymn closed:

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

After the benediction and quiet spell of silent prayer, the organ chimed out the refrain and the congregation moved reverently out. An aged woman came with others toward the foot of the pulpit. As she spoke quietly to the pastor, her trembling hand took his; her eyes were dimmed with tears, and she said, "I feel I have been with Him this morning. That last hymn threw open the portals for me."

What a benediction! It brings to our minds a new vision of what Christian worship may be.

Are we valuing aright the place hymnology may have and should have in worship? Heaven is pictured for us as a place of song. Why not make earth heaven by using it aright?

"Ten thousand times ten thousand
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steeps of light."

Can we imagine them without praise and song on their lips?

"Around the throne of God in heaven thousands of children stand"; but they are singing. How else can we picture them? Why not make music more sacred and thrilling in all our worship?

"Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of life."

It was a quiet funeral service. Scarcely had the preacher closed those precious words, "The Lord is my Shepherd," when a sweet voice, hidden behind the palms, broke out in those staying, consoling words, "Rock of ages, cleft for me." Eyes were dimmed, but hearts were consoled. The tears had brought the rainbow out of the clouds, for the eternal Sun shone through the storm! "Lead kindly light, amid the encircling gloom."

Years ago a blind Chinese girl, with a voice of deep human sympathy, was singing in our Chinese Rescue Home in San Francisco. Her sad life had been reclaimed. She knew her Lord, and scarcely an eye was dry as she sweetly sang:

"Once I was blind, but now I can see;
The light of the world is Jesus."

Music is God's means of touching sad and hardened hearts, and we are too frequently forgetting its sacred mission. Again and again through the old hymns, and many of the new ones, a heavenly Father is giving this lullaby to His tired children.

Nothing stays with us like the hymns we love, and the church has this wondrous means of showing anew His love and tenderness. Who does not love those blessed hymns which are associated with life's most precious memories? Such hymns include "Abide With Me," "Nearer My God to Thee," "Jesus Lover of My Soul," "Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me," "Let the Lower Lights be Burning." This last hymn calls to my mind an extraordinary experience.

Just as the preacher was about to start his sermon and had given out his text and theme on "Christ the Light of the World," the church was suddenly plunged in complete darkness. There was an embarrassing silence when one of those on the platform started in a clear, strong voice, "Let the lower lights be burning, send a gleam across the wave." Instantly the great congregation was in song. Darkness was forgotten. A spiritual uplift had seized the embarrassed throng, and ere the chorus was closed, the lights came on. It was only a burned-out fuse, but night was transformed into day. Everyone was at ease; the preacher glowed in his message, for song had met a crisis and the spirit of God spoke. Praise can never lose its power, and a revival of spiritual life will come through an appreciation and revival of church music.

TEMPTING OTHERS

HE was only a colored porter on a train. I had ridden in his sleeper before, but I noticed as he took my grip he looked away and did not seem to be so glad to see me as formerly. When he came to answer the bell and lift my window for the night I discovered the reason; he had an unmistakable breath! He had been drinking.

Quietly I told him I was sorry, but he quickly denied it, saying it was "spaghetti." "Oh, no, Bill," was my reply, "the firm that could make that kind of 'spaghetti' would long since have retired with vast wealth." He did not see my point, but still affirmed it was only "spaghetti."

The next morning he was truthful and penitent, for when I said, "Good morning, Spaghetti," he confessed freely with the natural remark and excuse, "An old friend of mine who often rides with me offered me a drink from his flask and I hadn't the strength to say no." I believe he told the truth, and anyway, the remark has stayed in my memory. If true, what error the act revealed!

If a poor, weak porter who was trying to do his humble duty, and support his home with his all too meager wages, has such temptation forced upon him by men who cannot see his danger, who is really the sinner in the case?

I did not report that porter; perhaps I should have done so, but he pledged me he would quit, and not repeat the act. I wish, however, I could have

gotten in touch with the man who offered him the drink.

We are told that "the little sins of great men make the great sins of little men." This may not always be true, but a porter, caught with a drink on his breath, will ordinarily lose his job, and should lose it. Public safety depends on such discipline. Prohibition was brought about by our great industries and great railroads even more than by our church leaders or reformers. The public weal and safety demanded the standard. It was another instance of "safety first."

How, then, can a real man, no matter what his public view, offer a drink to a public servant? Especially to a weak colored porter on duty? Why should any of us put temptation in the way of others? Loss of temper may illustrate the same tendency of forgetfulness.

A bell-boy in a hotel had delivered a coat to the wrong room, and discovering his error, quickly corrected it with proper apology. Instead of graciously accepting such apology, the injured patron angrily berated him before several other guests, and finally provoking the lad, had him discharged. It took four weeks to get the boy back into work, and meanwhile a sick widowed mother and two younger children went hungry and cold.

The stranger knew nothing of it and perhaps cared less, but a bit of patience and kindness would have kept temptation and evil out of the lad's life. The old scriptural adage of "being our brother's

keeper" is out of style nowadays, and largely a forgotten and ridiculed bit of former-generationism; but it is as vital and true as the calendar, and still makes or breaks character.

Many a man who can overcome temptation when alone *cannot* when influenced by popular request and enticing companionship. Even if we are selfish enough to yield to desired personal indulgence, why should a man disregard the endeavors of others and tempt them to follow suit?

"Why did you quit an occasional glass?" asked a friend of his companion. "Well," came a quick reply, "my boys were starting in, and one of them came home drunk one night. I stopped and they stopped, too."

Many years ago a friend of mine asked a hardy, husky man, strong in his personality, if he wouldn't wear an overcoat in walking down to his business. "Why," came the reply, "I don't need it." "Yes," was the quick rejoinder, "but if you don't your copy-cat, Harry, will die of pneumonia."

Try as we may, we are helping or tempting others day by day, and the old world needs those who, like the Man of Nazareth, help each other.

"LEST WE FORGET"

IN Arthur John Gossip's recent book, "The Hero of the Soul," he refers to Wordsworth's statement that "his greatest inspiration had a way of coming to him in the night, and he had to teach

himself to write in the dark that he might not lose that inspiration." Gossip adds, "we, too, had better learn this art of writing in the dark."

There is a suggestion here which is worthy of our thought. How many of the splendid things which we would like to do, do we forget? How many of the fine things we would like to say, we never utter? Before we make the particular speech, the theme inspires us and we realize what a wealth of truth there is related to it all, but alas! experience does not bear out that prophecy!

Again, how easy it is to think of fine things we might have said after the speech has been finished and the opportunity has passed!

Maltbie D. Babcock was once asked how he remembered so many little things which might have been easily overlooked. He replied, "I jot them down when I think of them and try to carry them out at once." He had a scratch-pad and pencil on a table by his bed.

Of course, this all requires an unselfish, thoughtful, willing spirit. Laziness and lassitude go together. If controlled by languor and debilitated by physical weariness, we become disinterested and careless; but the alert, energetic, thoughtful life does not forget, but is anxious to remember.

Many promises are made which are never fulfilled, simply because of this natural tendency to "forget all about it." Little children are especially overlooked at times. A child should *never* be promised a gift or pleasure without a certainty on

the part of the one who promises to fulfill it. They not only remember it themselves, but they are liable to begin to feel that older people do not mean what they say.

Many of the things we forget *should be* forgotten, without doubt. We should forget the unpleasantnesses and unkindnesses of life. We should forget that which clouds and worries. We like to forget the breaks and errors we have made, but it is not at all wise to forget our weaknesses and wrong tendencies. To remember them makes us more careful and better prepared to fight against them.

Whatever prompts us to remember the things which we read, or hear, or see, which would be helpful to others, we should encourage and utilize. A note or date book has become almost an essential to the thoughtful mind; but it is not enough to note the purpose; we must aim to fulfill that purpose.

Congestion of activity today is not all on our highways, nor in places of traffic, but within the mind itself. Confused by an over-amount of movement and action, we sometimes fail to arrive at our destination or perform the task of duty.

The quiet, uniform fulfillment of each day's task, of each hour's opportunity, of each moment's chance, seemed to control preëminently the day's work of the Master. *He did not forget,* and he gives to us one of his most sacred and beautiful memorials in those priceless words: "Do this *in remembrance* of me."

RESTING AS WE WORK

THE heart rests between its beats. We are told that actual contraction of the heart muscle takes but one-tenth of a second; then, until the next contraction begins, about eight-tenths of a second later, the heart rests. In other words, our hearts rest about seven-eighths of the time to do the effective work of one-eighth of the time, in pumping blood throughout the body and keeping us alive and alert for action. The heart does not hibernate, nor go into a long winter rest to recuperate for the coming months, but takes its rest regularly and constantly.

All nature reveals to us the laws of regularity and system. Carelessness is not known. The dilatory and thoughtless member is soon diseased or dies. Faithfulness is essential to health. Many a man's task is drudgery to him because he does not carry out the faithful and consistent laws of continuance and regularity.

We are expected to rest as well as to work, but the man who can rest constantly and perform his task with renewed vigor because of such regularity and rest is the man who does not wear out and who meets the test of special strain and emergency.

One of our noted and most useful physicians—a man of rare prominence in the West, where he built up a large practice—was an almost incessant worker. He had learned, however, to rest ad interim. In times of great strain and multiple opera-

tions he found time to go into his little inner office, slip into an easy chair between operations, and go soundly to sleep for a brief period, telling his office girl or nurse to wake him in five, ten or fifteen minutes, as the requirements might demand. He came back to his office and the operating table alert, keen and ready. He had trained himself to rest as he worked, if the physical and mental powers demanded such relief.

In the multiplied activities of the complex lives which many of us are living, there is a need of restfulness as we go along. Hurry always causes worry and a hurried life is seldom a useful life. If we could but rest as we go! The very wrinkles on one's brow evidence anxiety and turmoil within. A rested life does not wear a wrinkled face.

It is possible to step aside from active duty for a moment and rest. A brief walk, a flash of fresh air from an open window, a change of one's thought quickly may accomplish the same result.

A prominent linguist, whose work is very confining in translation and kindred application, has a very beautiful painting on his study wall of a pastoral scene on the Alpine heights of Switzerland. It is a striking view of peasant life upon the heights and blends the gentleness of human nature with the rugged conception of the great mountains. You can almost hear the tinkle of the Swiss cowbell as you look at the grazing kine and you can almost imagine the roar of the distant avalanche as you see the craggy heights and ice-filled glacier

chasms. Remarking once to him of the place the picture had in his study, he replied: "That is my rest. I can look up from my closest investigation to that picture and get the full value of a quick vacation. It rests my very soul. My eyes and brain return to my manuscript refreshed."

He had solved the problem. We must rest as we go, and enjoy our tasks without murmuring or anxiety.

KEEPING AHEAD

AN early train in August compelled an early rising. We were waiting at the station. As we looked up into the sky, in that black period of night which precedes the early gray tinges of the coming sun, the Morning-Star fairly magnetized us with its clear, piercing brightness. Every other star in the heavens seemed dull and lusterless. The waning moon seemed pale and dim. The glory of the heavens has not been known by him who has not seen The Morning-Star.

This star not only attracts because of its brightness and brilliancy, but because it ushers in the Sun! It always heralds the day, which it leads into light. It always keeps ahead of the Sun. The scene will not erase itself from my mind as the days come and go. It seems to say "Why not always keep ahead with your work?" This has been the habit which has unconsciously assisted those who have blessed the world with their deeds and life.

Why wait till the evening star appears to do the things which the present day demands? Those who start in time, not only to do, but to get ready, are those who are never late. Hence they are never worried and hurried, for hurry and worry are cousins. The old wise seer was right when he said "A little more sleep, a little more slumber, so shalt thy poverty come." The "Morning-Star" life radiates light, cheer and encouragement everywhere.

When a chaplain in the world war, one morning before dawn, on my way to early mess, I met a big Irish lad who had been a notorious loafer in our ward in Chicago. He was whistling, alert and walking to his work, and as straight as an arrow.

"Patrick," said I, "do you know whether it is yourself or not up so early and happy too?" He answered heartily with a broad smile and brogue. "Sure, it's meself, Captain, I've learned that by getting up early in the mornin' you get a day's work done before you get up."

He didn't know he was a wit but the lad was right, and has, since the war, become a respectable, worthwhile citizen. He had learned more than the secret of getting up early. He had learned to *keep ahead* with his work.

I have never known a discouraged preacher who kept his work or sermons ahead. Accumulated, unmade calls; careless, neglected study; unkept records, these are the things which cause short pastorates as well as unpaid, neglected bills.

It is not merely a matter of the pastorate, however, but applies to all alike. The man or woman who "keeps ahead" with his work is much like the financier who always closes his books with a substantial balance. Being ahead of the game is the best lubricator for life's engine, and saves friction, wear and disaster. The Master knew this when on His busiest days, He got up "a long while before day," or when the disciple drew near to the shore, and saw one standing there who *had already* started a fire of coals.

SLEEP OVER IT

OUR judgments and decisions are too frequently made when the spirits are low and the mind unresponsive. Problems should be faced with zest and alertness, not when the body is wearied and the brain fatigued. Many projects have failed because of overburdened leadership or worn-out nervous systems. If work and plans seem to drag and discourage, take a nap and put the whole project to sleep until you are rested and responsive.

A listless athlete never won a race, nor an overstrained, exhausted team a game. Our old trainer in football college days used to say, "Pep up, boys, by going to bed early." It was good advice and excellent philosophy. The task that seems insurmountable will sometimes accomplish itself when faced with a rested brain and a merry heart.

The Divine Creator not only put a rest day into

the week, but made the heart with a comparatively long rest period between each beat.

"Let me think it over," said a friend when asked to share a burden. "I'm tired tonight, but I'll give it my best thought when I'm rested." The matter was not pressed but a fine response was later given and sympathetic coöperation resulted. Sleep over your problem and take it up again when thoroughly rested.

A little boy was crying up in the nursery and the father, coming home wearied, was irritable and annoyed. "What is the matter with the child anyway?" he said hastily. "I've a good mind to go up and spank him thoroughly." There was no angry retort but, taking in the situation, the young mother slipped quietly out of the room and, with gentle voice and hand, soon had the little lad sleeping. Then she gave her attention in the same tactful manner to the bigger boy downstairs, who was not only the little lad's father but also had his little son's temperament and disposition, which so easily came to the surface when weariness set in. In the morning father and son were happy and cheerful and started off, the one to his office and the other to his school, with the world looking like a million dollars.

That wife and mother understood life and human nature. She used rest and slumber to conquer and overcome evil with good. Many a quarrel would never take place if we would let the night-winds waft it away.

Why not sharpen our tools before we start to carve? An old wood carver in the Bernese Oberland once told me he never began his day's work without sharpening all his knives and tools, for he implied the wood must have the keenest edge.

If perplexed and anxious over our tasks, let us forget them till we are rested and then face them with a smile and good cheer after we have "slept over it."

LIVING ABOVE DISCOURAGEMENTS

IT is not easy to cast off discouragement and depression. Sometimes it takes more effort than physical nature seems to possess, but after all it is a real test of character. Sanguine temperaments usually have their ups and downs. The brightest metal seems to catch the mist quickest and dull itself almost instantaneously. In the highlands of Scotland when the sun bursts through the clouds quickly the highlander seeks shelter with the remark, "A blink before a drink."

Life needs a lot of courage if victories are to be won, and keeping cheerful has much to do with it. The slow, continued, patient persistence of a confident soul wins ultimately, but a rigid watchfulness is required to overcome the subtle and deadly force of discouragement. Here Christian character is realized and seen. One does not fight alone; the "Lo I am with you always" must become the creed and very life-breath of the striver.

Discouragements frequently are the results of physical weariness, or mental fatigue. A good nap, or a brief vacation may dispel the fog, or lift the cloud. Where these are impossible a complete change in employment, or totally differing scenes may suffice! Something that will relieve this tension without effort. The danger is in letting the mood continue, for it invariably increases and may stretch to the breaking point. Then irrevocable loss or even tragedy may result.

Humor saves many, and is a friend indeed when present. I remember a sad family once traveling to the funeral service of a loved father. The children had never been on a sleeping-car before, and came to the mother in consternation because the wash-room did not provide soap. They declared the stingy negligence of the railroad company in such oversight, but when they were shown that the little pump-faucet at the side of the bowl provided liquid-soap, they were not only appeased but delighted, and continued to wash as never before. The humor of it was the one thing needed by that tired, discouraged mother, and seemed to save the day.

To see the evident pain revealed in the very face of some selfish hoarder of wealth when asked to give to a worthy cause may be a source of anger or of good-natured mirth mingled with pity. But whatever the cause of or excuse for adverse feeling in any attempted work discouragement should have no chance to show itself.

One of our ablest college presidents has testified that a refusal to help him in his great task enlivens his faith in God, increases his efforts, and makes him increasingly happy that he is not rich. If a man's ideal and plan are greater than his desire for immediate success he will ultimately attain his goal. After all, discouragement only lowers the temperature of good will and paves the way for failure.

"Whether he wins or not," said one admirer of one who had undertaken a big task, "he will never give up and he'll always wear a smile." After all, "the joy of the Lord is a man's strength."

GIVE AND LIVE

IN "The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft" an incident is given of the author's finding in a lovely wood a ten-year-old lad who was utterly crushed in spirit and crying bitterly, all because he had lost a sixpence. The coin was given him to pay a debt, and the boy was in the "anguish of despair" at his loss. The writer adds that his supplying the amount "wrought six pennies worth of miracle," and changed bitter grief into normal life and happiness.

This simple incident prompts a valuable consideration. Many of the problems of this old world just now center about the old commodity of money. Deny it we may; complain of it; denounce it; deplore it—still it is a fact. Social difficulties relate

to it; economic conditions are occasioned by it; labor and capital discuss it, and the wage rate centers in it. International relationships must adjust themselves to it, and commercial and industrial progress are dependent on it.

When we consider the broad questions of material and educational development, money seems to supply or withhold means of promotion and advance, either through public tax or private philanthropy. The money question is an important one and is uppermost in practical consideration among nations and people.

Essayists, moralists, preachers and philosophers may arraign themselves against this earthly and mercenary fact, but there it stands like a Gibraltar at the very entrance of the harbor, and its cold, long-distance guns defy opposition.

What then are we to do? Denounce money as evil along with those who misquote Scripture by calling it "the root of all evil"? Or, are we to honor it, and rejoice in its proper value and use?

No, "money is not the root of all evil," but the "love of money" is.

If money is to be used with highest valuation, it must be gained and used aright.

There is no greater joy on earth, we are told, and we know, than the joy experienced in giving money heartily to worthy objects and people.

Money's damage has come from hoarding it and bestowing it upon those who have not the character or wisdom to use it aright.

There have been notable examples in the past and there are those today who give and spend, not only to the glory of God but to their own joy and benefit. Their personality is shown in the type of gifts they make, and at the same time their gifts enable them to extend their personality through a wide range of social need.

The very faces of great benefactors grow warm and kindly and sympathetic. The soul grows beautiful as the heart finds benevolent expression.

Men of benevolence are not only large hearted; they are loved more and by greater masses of mankind than all others.

The church of Christ is doing much in training her membership to give regularly and systematically, but there is still before us the task of teaching mankind the "fun of giving"; the joy of making presents to God and man.

All through Italy and France and other parts of Europe one can see beautiful roadways and walks lined with young trees—evergreens, maples, elms, beech, linden and others. These have been set out since the war, and each bears the name of a loved brother, son, husband, father or sweetheart who was lost in that fearful struggle. Loving hands water and train those young trees, and on through the years to come, until they are strong and old, this will continue. In them saddened and lonely hearts find their joy of giving to those they love.

The joy of giving must find its heart-way into money giving, too, if men are to grow less selfish;

if society is to be reclaimed; if the church is to be properly supported, and if nations in debt and dependent are to be able to free themselves and advance. The joy of giving blesses those who give and interprets the true law of love to others.

DOING ONE'S DUTY

THE word "duty" is not as popular as it once was, and there are those who say it is old-fashioned and out of sympathy with the present age. But only the thoughtless refer to it in such manner. The fact is that the word "duty" is eternal, and cannot be overlooked nor disregarded in any honest life. There can be no true character without a recognition of its preëminence, and instead of being an enemy of love and devotion, it is a true and noble friend.

All of us need "the secret consciousness of duty well performed." There can be no real happiness in life when one fails to do his duty or ignores it. Gladstone said, "Duty is a power which rises with us in the morning and goes to rest with us at night. It is co-extensive with the action of our intelligence; it is the shadow which cleaves to us, go where we will, and which only leaves us when we leave the Light of Life."

Frederick W. Robertson said, "Let a man begin in earnest with 'I ought' and he will end, by God's grace, if he persevere, with 'I will.' "

In the complexity of the present demands made

upon our time in a busy age such as our own, when novelty is seeking to take the place of faithfulness; when so many are forgetting the sacred obligations and vows of human life, there is no one quality which can direct our aims and temper our lives and control our purposes better than the doing of one's simple duty from day to day, from hour to hour, from moment to moment.

And, after all, it is well said that "duties do not conflict." Sometimes they seem to conflict, but if one stops to think there is the obligation which controls the incentive when duty rules preëminently.

The habit of doing one's duty helps to control one's feelings also: weariness is conquered by it, and we go on doing because we ought to do.

Those who have not a sense of duty and have not known the blessing of such obedience have never realized the satisfaction which comes from work well done, even though that work be distasteful or disagreeable.

"This one thing I do" of the apostle's reasoning and determination was not simply an impulsive resolve, but was the result of a fixed habit of doing one's duty.

Those who have trained themselves in the rigid school of duty somehow develop the graces of life, and live with that clearness of conscience which gladdens the face and brightens the soul.

Instead of being an irksome taskmaster, duty becomes the King of Love and the Prince of Peace.

TRYING TO CATCH UP

TO many people life is always a matter of catching up. They are invariably behind. Pleasant duties are irksome because they have to be done hurriedly. Regular duties must be given second place because the extra task has been neglected until it becomes an emergency matter. All because one has not looked ahead. Procrastination has become a fixed habit, and superficial, irritating work results. This is especially true at the holiday season. For this reason streets and stores are overcrowded, clerks rushed, deliveries delayed and a general condition of confusion, nervousness and depression exists.

Why not foresee the situation and avoid it? Why not change your method? Why should the most blessed season of the year be made an unpleasant prospect to such a vast number of public servants when its joys should be shared by them?

This question affects the home as well as the store and street. It affects the mails, the express companies, the schools and all departments of active life. Churches and Sunday schools feel it in the absence of members and teachers. "I was just too dead tired to get up," is a frequent reply to inquiry about absence on Christmas Sunday; and it often takes not only days but weeks to get back to normal again. Rooms are in confusion, meals late, regular retiring impossible. The rush is on!

Just a little planning would obviate this confu-

sion and give contentment to all concerned. It would again restore pleasure to the anticipation of Christmas, in place of dread. Children would have their rightful pleasure. Joy would be in the very air.

Again, this unfretting season would make possible more thoughtful preparation. Gifts would mean more, and remembrances would be chosen with greater care for appropriateness. Christmas cards are almost meaningless now because of their universal and indiscriminate use. One does not know whether or not to acknowledge them, and he could not find time if inclined to do so. They have lost most of their original significance and sentiment.

Because of the hurried necessity many of the old-time customs of the Christmas and holiday season are omitted. There is little or no time to read the old Christmas stories. There is little time for the time-honored festivals. No practice hour for the carols, which are a blessed inheritance, can be squeezed out. There is no time to write new ones. The contagion of confusion shows everywhere. The season has become commercialized, and awakens unconsciously the spirit of competition in giving. Gifts are frequently considered on the basis of what others will give or expect, not as tokens of friendship and good will. Lists of "what you would like" frequently rob Christmas morning of the happy surprises of the long ago; it is so much easier to get what some one has requested than to use

thought and ingenuity to select an appropriate gift.

Again, the very trimming of the tree has come to be done very late or possibly the last night, instead of being the one thing (together with the hanging up of the stockings) which held a charm for weeks ahead. Even children must be "made" happy instead of feeling the natural thrill weeks before of delightful preparation and the anticipated morning when all the family would meet together without a thought of hurry or confusion.

Failure to look ahead and to plan ahead has led also to the delegating of caring for the poor to societies and organizations, which do it for us—sometimes rendering these deeds of love and benevolence embarrassing to the objects of them because they come through organized charity. Such gifts should be the expression of a personal and spontaneous interest. (Information and suggestions may be secured from our many useful philanthropic societies.) But the personal touch will always count more in sustaining good will among differing classes than the amount of material help. Little children learn lessons of generosity and kindness in selecting a Christmas basket with proper guidance, and themselves, with parental escort, delivering it to the home.

Let us look ahead to Christmas, and the holiday time; and hold ourselves in need to keep the normal life of home and society rightly adjusted to this happy season. Thus we may restore the joyful an-

ticipations of former days, and give to the generation now growing up the thrilling and blessed memories which are indelibly associated with our own childhood. Look ahead. Begin now.

TODAY'S TASK

PAUL'S assertion, "This one thing I do," is worth constant reëmphasis. The present task is the important one. Ambition for the future must justify itself in the faithful performance of immediate duty. The "has been" of life or the "going to be" cannot take the place of the present effort. The man who acts with this thought altogether on the hope that his action may be a stepping-stone to something he hopes to gain or aims to achieve in the future will seldom go far; but the man who performs his present act with the sole desire to do it to the best of his ability will in all probability be in demand for a greater task.

Doing the duty of the hour with all one's might and mind leads to added duty and enlarged usefulness.

"Act, act in the living present,
Heart within and God o'erhead"

leads to the "life sublime," and is the secret of making "The Psalm of Life" a psalm through life.

"You are a good driver," said the passenger to a taxi chauffeur. "If you keep driving this way you will some time hold down a fine job."

"Thank you, sir," was the quick reply. "I'm only thinking of doing this job well."

The lad unconsciously had the right spirit. Present work commanded his best! Future advance is sure to the man who gives that type of service.

There is also a genuine pleasure in such service! A man is not constantly disturbed by his anxiety to be recognized and his eagerness to be advanced. His fun comes in the doing of his immediate task. His attention is undivided; his enthusiasm focused. He invests in the immediate instead of speculating in prospects. He lives in the present and enjoys today. Excellence here and now is his aim. Frequent advancement is not required to purchase his faithfulness.

This spirit overcomes restlessness. Contentment insures happiness. The man who loves his present task conquers discouragement and suffers no disappointment. His satisfaction is contagious, and others, too, feel happy in their work.

"How do you like your school?" asked a lad of another. "Finest ever," came the ready answer. It is needless to add that this boy was doing well and was faithful in his studies.

The man who is always troubled about bettering his position is seldom worth while to his employer.

The preacher or teacher who always feels he is not appreciated and is worthy of "a larger field" seldom is valued and seldom advances. Any field and every field is bigger than any man in oppor-

tunity and responsibility. Big men are not self-discovered nor self-advertised.

The world is most observant and the man who performs a small task in a big way will soon find himself in a bigger task.

"Have you noticed that second boy at the necktie counter?" said a floor-walker to the floor superintendent.

"No," said the man, "what about him?"

"He is the happiest, most diligent lad on this floor," was the reply. "He is always on the job, and contented."

That lad is now at the head of a large department and in line for still further promotion, although he does not know it.

To make life glow because you are a part of it is to warm all about you and create an atmosphere of good will.

True ambition centers itself in making the work we are doing better, not in seeking better work. Advance grows out of effort and faithfulness, not from discontent and dissatisfaction.

Children learn to walk by gaining poise step by step, not by attempting to run, nor by crying because they fail. True, there is plenty of room at the top; but one must begin below and climb, and it is the steady work below that attains.

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do it heartily as unto the Lord."

Tomorrow will take care of itself, for today is

tomorrow in disguise; and the man who joys and works in his present task is bound to hear the call sooner or later, "Come up higher."

BUSY HERE AND THERE

"AND as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone." This old text taken from I Kings 20:40 was my text one Sunday morning. The old subject seemed to take hold upon the congregation in an extraordinary way. Men and women by the score thanked me for it afterward, or have since spoken or written their approval. One family returning from a far-away journey, into northwest Canada, writes: "We had been to bury our honored father, who died in a far-away land doing his duty. You no doubt see how consoling your sermon was to us, as we feel that he had just heard the words 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' "

These somewhat unusual and repeated expressions of appreciation evidence very clearly the place and need of considering the subject of duty more thoughtfully.

It is not a popular word. It is old-fashioned, stern, uncompromising and compelling. Pleasure, desire, popularity, custom, habit—all these have relegated this word with its hard visage from every-day thinking. Yet for duty there is no substitute in this world, if we are to advance and if strength is to be developed.

The weakling prefers to do what he wants instead

of doing his duty. The lazy man is too busy doing something easier than his duty. The shiftless ne'er-do-well is so busy doing "any old thing" that he cannot do any worth-while thing. The "I want" of life is conquering the "I ought" of life. This is the cause of general failure, ofttimes dramatic in its character.

Among those who spoke to me after the service was a lad just reaching into the later years of his youth. He was a stranger to me, but his words remain. "I never just knew what duty meant before, but I see that it means that a fellow must do what he ought to do." I have no questions as to the future of that lad.

Our duties must control our time, strength, minds and hearts. We crown as victor the man who does his duty in a time of trying and conspicuous test, but all through the ordinary ranks of life the faithful men and women are making this world better and stronger. A very cold spell which we experienced, brought to light many such heroes, faithful to duty in the commonplace ranks of life. Among them, a taxicab driver clung to work until without his being aware of it his hands were frozen stiff to the steering-wheel. It was necessary to remove the wheel from the shaft when they took him into the hospital. One of his hands may not be saved. Simply a matter of duty! And how many have followed the same course!

"What would I like to do?" is not the question that builds character. "What should I do?" is.

It is possible in such a day as this to receive commendation for doing many things fairly well, being jack-of-all-trades of usefulness; but this does not really test character. One can be so busy doing the things falling into his hands, that he will fail to do the things he ought to do. The servant may be busy enough and yet betray the special trust which is his.

God honors the man who does his duty and man honors him, too; and just now this stern doctrine of fidelity is needed in a world of restlessness, carelessness, indifference and mere sentimentality.

ENTERING INTO THE RECREATION OF OTHERS

THE teacher who is interested in his scholar's recreation and play wins a real place in his friendship, and creates an atmosphere of human sympathy.

It is fully as important as being familiar with the studies or work which employs his serious moments, and breaks down the reserve which frequently deters confidence. It also has a very vital influence on the teacher's attitude of mind, and may lessen anxiety and awaken genuine interest. In many a class there grows up an unconscious barrier between teacher and scholar which is the result of disassociation in the simple interests which pertain.

To know and recognize the natural play-in-

stinct, and encourage it at the right time, will awaken a sense of mutual regard, and contribute to growing appreciation of one another.

A friend of mine was losing his hold on his fourteen-year-old boys. They were becoming irregular in attendance and generally indifferent. One day he asked the ringleader if he could umpire for them Saturday afternoon at their club's ball game. Instantly all were alive with response. "Do you know the game?" one asked. Another, "Can you play ball?" et cetera. It resulted in his getting out early to the park and batting the infield and outfield before the game was called.

He umpired and he umpired well, and knew the difference when a pitched ball cut the plate at the corner.

From that afternoon his class began to boom, and in time he was the most popular teacher in our school.

Another illustration I call to mind. A young woman took her class one Saturday morning in early spring to hunt trailing arbutus along one of the tributaries of the Severn River near Baltimore. They had a successful day, and a glorious picnic as well. The girls never forgot it and from that day she was their real friend.

All kinds of opportunities arise if one is on the alert. Boys collect coins and stamps as of old, and are responsive to help and interest. There are numerous places of interest in a city which will attract and amuse, and are often instructing as well. The

human element has more to do with effective friendship than many of us appreciate.

To discover, without the investigating attitude, the ordinary amusements and play of our pupils, and then take an interest in them is worth while. This also applies to a knowledge of the books they are reading; the kind of reading they enjoy; sometimes the passing around of a good book in the round-robin system; all or any of these methods may be used wisely.

Attending school exercises or school plays will also show a real interest and the pupil will feel that the teacher has more than a Sunday interest.

All this takes time and demands sacrifice but it is sure to win affection and friendship. It also has a reflex and helpful influence with parents, and may prompt them to consider the worthwhileness of giving more time to their children's simple pleasures.

A few months ago, when speaking in a small city, I was entertained in a home by a young family who were decided factors in the church. In the afternoon several girls dropped in, and naturally and cordially welcomed me. Upon inquiry I found they were members of the Sunday-school class of my hostess and learning that she was to entertain the minister, asked if they could meet him, too. Such a simple girl-like greeting it was, and I easily understood the secret of that teacher's success.

After all, there is nothing in the art of successful teaching which means more than the personal ele-

ment, and we may well learn from the great Teacher these lessons of prizing aright the commonplace of pleasure as well as duty.

THE MESSAGE OF SPRING

EVERY year with glad hearts and thrilling anticipations we await the return of the spring. The first tinges of green covering dead fields with a thin veil of living color; the clear liquid note of the robin from the budding branches of the apple tree; the closing screen of bursting leaves as they shut off the far views of the winter's expanse; the color-scheme of crocus and jonquil as they burst from frost-freed ground! All these seem to harmonize with the spinning tops and colliding marbles of the small boys, and the hoop-rolling and rope-jumping of their eager little sisters. Overcoats and furs begin to be shed, and everyone seems to walk more briskly, smile more easily, take deeper breaths, and stand a little taller. Spring is here again.

And spring brings Easter Day, and the great truth of the Resurrection and newness of life. The old seem to forget their age, and the young seem to look out into life with new enthusiasm, and a bigger vision and purpose.

Yet how quickly we forget the change in nature and accustom ourselves to the season as if it had always been springtime.

Quietly and steadily the warm rains and higher

sun will deepen the foliage, and cover the earth with living beauty, till suddenly we become conscious that spring has come and gone and that summer is here. We find ourselves settling into her enfolding comfort and recreation as naturally as if it had always been summer.

The days will begin to shorten, and the fields will grow golden, and the winds cooler, and the harvests will be gathered in, and gradually flakes of snow will scurry again through the chill air, and ere we know it old winter will envelop us all again.

Thus go the seasons and the years, but why look too far ahead? Why not enjoy the glorious spring while it is here, and live each day with the full length and happiness of growing, beautiful, fragrant life? The spring bids us all be children once again. The spring points us all to the great outdoors of bigness and joy.

Spring bids us bury forever old fears and fevers. It bids us smooth wrinkled brows and lift the corners of our mouths. It puts a song in every breast, and tells us to forget the meaning of a sigh.

Spring tells us to forgive and forget old griefs and injuries. To let "all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil-speaking be put away from us with all malice."

It bids us hear The One who said "I am The Resurrection and The Life" say to us also, "Behold I make all things new."

As I write, an old hymn my mother taught me comes to my heart's memory! It betokens the

thought of our theme! It says anew better than any of us can utter the message of the springtime:

"Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things
To heaven, thy native place."

PICKING UP ENDS

WHEN a lad of fourteen the ambition came to work during vacation. Necessity had something to do with it as well, for my father was not well, and it seemed only fair to do one's part. Wages for a boy were low, but three dollars a week for ten hours was fair pay, and seemed very good pay in those days. My job was in a lumber district of the city and the three-mile walk to and from work was a part of the job.

They set me to work "picking up ends" for the ponderous Irishman who lowered the lumber-pile by shoving off lumber to diminish the pile. It was bend and stoop from morning till night with only an occasional let-up, when my sturdy companion wanted to ease up a little or get a drink. Shoulders and arms protested constantly, but what could a boy do? If he stopped or was played out; if he grumbled or weakened, there were others who were anxious to take his place. How well I recall those first days. Sometimes it seemed quite impossible to go on, but dogged determination and fear of ridicule helped out, and in a week or two

those small muscles had become hardened, and ceased to rebel. The weeks sped on and the money helped, and at last persistency won, and I was promoted to a "Tally-boy," and with note-book and pencil stood or sat near the measurer as he measured the lumber being transferred from canal-boat to dock.

I had "stuck it through" as the boss said, and easier work and better pay resulted.

But that was not all; when High-school days opened in the Fall, baseball and football (then in its beginning) were more sport than ever, and the muscles trained in hard work made the game easier and skill increased. Nor was that all; life all through, with its many joys and duties, was less irksome and demanding. "Picking up ends" and the lumber yard had proved a school-room for facing hard tasks with zest and courage and hard work had given its rewards. The boy who never has to work, and to whom life is only a play-ground, never learns the real lesson so naturally and easily.

One of the inspiring testimonies of today came recently from the president of a large State University when he asserted that a large percentage of the strong men in the Senior Class had met many, if not all, their expenses by working their way through. These youths will meet the difficulties of life with success and ardor in all probability. There is a place today and always will be for the boy or man who is willing and eager to work.

The world is filled with those who think their

age owes them a living. These become the idle drones of society, and they soon become sour in temperament, and cynical as to others. Honest, hard, constant work will ever be rewarded, and every boy or man who determines to "work out his own salvation" will find a willing response, and a welcome fellowship with his fellow-men. A Carpenter's Son today rules the hearts of almost half the world.

Charles Kingsley once wrote: "Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do that day which must be done whether you like it or not. Being forced to work, and forced to do your best will breed in you a hundred virtues which the idle never know."

A NOBLE CITIZEN

A FEW months ago I was called upon to assist in officiating at the funeral of one of our most respected and conspicuous citizens. It was not the time nor place for extended eulogy, but still there was the expectancy of a few truthful and apt words of worthy recognition. The simple, strong, sympathetic character of the man had impressed all, and the large church in which he had worshipped was filled with his admiring mourners. A great section, pew after pew, was filled with his fellow-citizens, and it seemed to me as if the finest selection of manhood I had ever witnessed in our city were present.

When the time came to speak, I simply read the following list of words, without comment, except to say that these words, simple as they were, characterized the life we now honored.

Strong
Firm
Flexible
Courageous
Earnest
Persistent
Constant
Reliable
Capable
Industrious
Sympathetic
Companionable
Thoughtful
Discriminating
Intelligent
Just
Honorable
Affectionate
Loyal

I then added: He exemplified

Work
Integrity
Devotion
Simplicity
Manhood

Confidence
Citizenship
Brotherhood
Fatherhood
Patriotism
Home

Letters and personal words of appreciation came to me from that service far in excess of any I had ever received.

On another occasion I used the simple words at the service of a beloved and noted physician, as follows:

Courage
Hope
Perseverance
Vision
Insight
Skill
Diligence
Scholarship
Faith
Patience
Sacrifice
Self-effacement
Loyalty
Friendship
Love

As we weigh such words and characteristics, do we wonder at the influence of life's noblemen?

Kipling was right when he wrote those immortal words:

"If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you but not too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son."

LIVING BIG, NOT SMALL

LITTLENESS does not become Christian character. It is not a matter of size after all. The humming-bird commands equal respect with the eagle! His invisible wing holds matchless strength and fascinates the eye of an Audubon as much as the widespread pinions of the upper air and mountain aerie. Bigness is a soul-condition, not an outward form.

The big soul lives above the little irritabilities of life, and is not perturbed by the littleness of human nature. "The little flies spoil the ointment" unless we have learned the real value of life. A careless word may cloud a sunny morning; a thoughtless act cloud a sunbeam; unless life has its bigness, and overcomes the incidental harm.

If one is to live the big life he must follow a big leader, and gain continually the spirit of life's important and inspiring purpose.

"That will not trouble him," said a youth to whom was repeated a bit of false and unkind gossip about a companion. "He lives big." The lesser man would become at once introspective and morose, but not the one of whom he spoke. Such bits of human weakness were overlooked almost instinctively, for he lived above them.

A petulant or over-wrought nature seems to send off disease-germs such as child diseases, like chickenpox or measles; but the best antidote is good health! A healthy soul has the source of recovery in his very health itself.

Self-defense in answering back spreads the trouble, and increases littleness. The big life knows the golden value of silence. Ole Bull, the famous Scandinavian violinist, was once slandered by the press, and a prominent New York newspaper offered him the freedom of its columns to answer back. He replied, "No, when they are talking against me I will play against them," and his ability, spirit and bigness won.

"He that controlleth his tongue is better than he that taketh a city" still holds, and "He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

A little soul is seldom, if ever, helped or strengthened by reputation, argument or self-defense. If he is meant for greater things he will be won by example and patience.

The Christ-like attitude of a big life aims to gain rather than outwit a smaller life. He sees in his would-be enemy a friend who has erred in

judgment, and hopes to help him. Bitterness and resentment are unknown to him. He lives in a different atmosphere.

Holding a weak man up to ridicule may overcome an immediate wrong, but in doing so a stronger life may ruin an already weak soul. "Give him what is coming to him," advised an athlete to his companion who had heard the unfounded slander a fellow player had blatantly expressed. "No," said the big leader, "What's the use? I'm not interested in hurting him. I want our team to win the game and he can help." It was repeated to the disgruntled complainer, and made a friend out of an enemy.

Bigness is far more influential than the contagion of ill speech. The Saviour showed his bigness far more in "not answering a word" than the impulsive Peter with his drawn sword.

The larger the life the more liable to receive at times the abuse of the inferior, but *bigness* wins from its very worth, and champions arise from most unexpected sources. Only the pretender and unreal fear publicity, and light. Right is its own best defense.

The little life must grow big, or succumb to suicide! Big lives grow bigger and gain strength to meet even bigger tasks.

There are frequently unseen causes back of littleness with which the big life is sympathetic instead of critical. "The poor fellow is a confirmed dyspeptic," said a slandered youth of his critic. "We

ought to sympathize with him instead of annihilating him. I'm *for* him whether he knows it or not." This man was the stroke-oar of his freshman university crew; his critic an unsuccessful candidate, but he lived to see his critic, his near oarsman on the "Varsity" and they became lifelong friends.

The biggest soul that ever lived said, "I am among you as one who serveth." Littleness has lost its place in history. Bigness has won and ever will win. Let us be big enough to overlook littleness, save as we can transform it into size, and thus bring up the average by *big margins.*

GOOD USE OF SPARE TIME

IT is acknowledged by all who think that the busy life is usually the happy life. Those who have nothing to do become wearied of life and a bore to those who have something to do. Aside from the time-worn adage that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," it is likewise true that idle hands make discontented souls. There are times for diversion and leisure most desirable and worthy, and solitaire or cross-word puzzles have their place, but not as a business in life. Such amusements become most irksome when indulged to the extreme and when carried on excessively. Work only can make occasional rest periods enjoyable. "The sleep of the laboring man is sweet."

Irrespective of this, however, spare time comes

to most of us. How do we use it? What do such moments naturally suggest? A great English essayist has written "Tell me how a man spends his spare time and I will give you a tolerable opinion as to his character."

Much of the valuable reading of many a man is afforded by his spare moments. A friend whose influence is world-wide and one of the best read men of my acquaintance, has perused and read hundreds of timely books during his commuting trips. His home is 45 minutes out of the city. He uses good print volumes to save his eyes. He does not spend a listless half hour on the abundant trash of the daily, although he scans the news in five or ten minutes and occasionally reads a good editorial, and usually takes in the baseball results. Neither is he unsociable when a friend greets him or sits beside him, but he uses his spare time to advantage in reading worth-while books, getting in about an hour, sometimes more, each day.

I have in memory a college friend who had formed the habit of catching up spare moments by studying the wild flowers in the fraternity yard. He did not make it a hobby, but a constant source of filling in time in the spring. He studied trees and nature. He has become one of the leading authorities in the scientific world, but claims he owes more to this habit of his spare time than to text books or class rooms.

Someone has said the man without a hobby is a man without a brain. Whether this be accurate

or not, an avocation has much to do with the success of a vocation.

Wholesome diversion is a requisite to success and the use of spare time has much to do with forming habits of thought and action.

One of the great ball players testifies he learned the game by using his spare time in enjoyable practice in pitching, and afforded fun to his companions at the same time.

Listless mind-wandering and shiftless living go together. The idle dreamer whose pencil is not in hand seldom writes poetry, nor prose for that matter, worthy of the name. A mud turtle loves to bask in the sun on any old log or rock, but a beaver uses his spare time aright, and enjoys the sun as well. Who wants to be a mud turtle?

A writer of old, whom we may well follow, says "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord."

TWO BLACK KITTENS

WE had been over the range on a short driving and fishing trip, my friend and I. We had a little runabout for our journey. Just as we were leaving the mountain home, a little black kitten, half frightened, scampered away from our car as the starter sounded a rather shrill alarm. "What a pretty kitten," we said in unison, and I added, "I wish I had one like it to take back with me."

"You may have two," came the reply from the

ranchman's child, and before I could argue or reason a burlap bag appeared with struggling life within. We stowed the bag away beneath our feet and almost forgot them except for an occasional sound or commotion. We knew they could breathe and were as comfortable as confined kittens could be.

We soon ran into a terrific rainfall, one of those storms that drench and drown, and our road became a veritable clay and adobe skidway. Darkness set in earlier than anticipated. Too soon it was night and we had met trouble. Far back in a lonely mountain road-meadow our unfortunate car had slipped, and we found ourselves up to the hubs in muck.

With effort we fanned a fire into living flame by using the wood and paper of our provision box for starting fuel.

Then we let the wild little black kittens out. Of all bewildered they exhibited it. The rain had ceased. They ran with alarm from us and the car but wet feet were distasteful and gradually they became more friendly. A can of condensed milk helped the truce. As soon as night deepened and coyotes and hoot-owls sounded they grew in confidence and ere morning came they were curled up peacefully in our laps and were even trying hard to purr.

Those tiny bits of black life proved a Godsend through our long, wet, chilly night and taught us both a lesson.

My friend to this day teases me at times, about the night we spent with the wee, black kittens and his humor always calls forth a hearty laugh from us both.

Kindness won even with two little terror-stricken cats from the mountain, and we as men learned a little more about the simple law of loving-kindness. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least" perhaps may apply here, and from two of God's little creatures we learned anew the gentler art of sympathy and love.

WHY NOT CHANGE YOUR GLASSES?

AS I was writing up here in my mountain den in the Rockies a dark snowy cloud blotted out the blue sky, and my room suddenly darkened. I was tempted to turn on artificial light when the thought occurred to me "Why not take off your dark glasses?" Immediately the room lighted up and even the clouds seemed breaking. The lesson went deeper. Are we not too often wearing dark glasses? True they are needed frequently, but why wear them all the time?

Some months ago I drove to an adjoining suburb of Chicago to address an evening gathering. I wondered at the gloom of the auditorium and almost was inclined to remark on the same, but wisely refrained. After speaking somewhat at a disadvantage I was about to ask my host, a very up-to-date and effective pastor, why he allowed his church to

be so poorly lighted, when it dawned on me I had spoken in dark glasses I had worn in driving to shield the glare of evening headlights on approaching cars. With a hearty laugh I confided in my friend, and he replied he feared my eyes were troubling me, and so had hesitated to remark upon it.

The joke was on me, and upon changing to my regular glasses the church seemed warm and cheerful.

Why not change your glasses? Life itself is sometimes seen by those who have dimmed perhaps the cheer and joy by dulled sight. Temperament may have something to do with it, or nervous irritability or even dyspepsia. The cloud has its silver lining we are told, but the individual may thoughtlessly cloud his day without being aware of it. Rainbows occur when the sun shines through the storm. Why not cause them to shine frequently by changing the glasses, at least there may be a suggestion in it.

Why go through life wearing dark glasses when they are not needed? After all, life is not gloomy to all and the way one looks at experience has much to do with good nature.

Once when traveling in Switzerland a friend of mine asked me to look through his powerful field glasses to a distant glacier. What had been a vast tract of whiteness became vital as we watched a little company of mountain climbers slowly crossing a deep cavern and we entered with them into their thrilling experience. All about us are living

joys if we have the right glasses and adjust them to the objects in view.

The wisest of men said "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light" and he also said "I am the light of the world."

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